

VODAFONE



Sir Peter Leitch Club

AT MT SMART STADIUM, HOME OF THE MIGHTY VODAFONE WARRIORS

6th June 2018

Newsletter #220



Stingrays win NZRL National Womens Competition Final



Falcons Laishon Jones feeds the back-line during a match against the Stingrays.



Stingrays Apii Nicholls-Pualau is wrapped up by the defence during a match against the Falcons.



Stingrays Hilda Peters is tackled by Falcons Mele Toki..

Photos courtesy of www.photosport.nz



New Zealand Kiwi Ferns captain Laura Mariu.
Photo www.photosport.nz



By John Coffey

Congratulations Laura Mariu MNZM

THE RUGBY league community was proud to see Kiwi Ferns captain Laura Mariu listed among the Queen's Birthday Honours recipients on Monday. Laura was awarded an MNZM (Member of the New Zealand Order of Merit) for her service to the game.

On a weekend of double celebrations, Laura also rescinded the international retirement she announced after the 2017 World Cup in Australia and has been included in the wider training squad for October's Test match against the Jillaroos in Auckland.

Laura, aged 37, already has an incredible record. She has played in all five women's World Cups and shared in the 2000, 2005 and 2008 victories. Last year she went close to a fourth triumph, only for the Australians to retain their crown 23-16 at Brisbane.

"After the World Cup I thought I'd hang up the boots on my Kiwi Ferns career but I just can't stay away," said the Papakura club and Counties zone stalwart. "While my body still allows me I'm keen to play in that Kiwi Ferns jersey if they'll have me."

For most of her working life Laura found employment which suited her rugby league career. But after the 2017 World Cup she began training at the police academy. Laura graduated in early May and is now serving in the Counties-Manukau district.



MANLY WARRIORS

VODAFONE



WALCOevents

SAT. 9 JUNE 2018, KICK-OFF 5PM, AMI STADIUM
WWW.TICKETEK.CO.NZ/MANLYWARRIORS

FOR INFO: WWW.WALCOEVENTS.NZ





Disability No Barrier To The Great Game Of League

By Bruce Cross | PDRLNZ Board Member



PHYSICAL DISABILITY Rugby League continues to grow.

The Vodafone Warriors and I put up a trophy, and last November, Physical Disability Rugby League New Zealand, hosted an inaugural International tournament - the Auckland PDRL Nines.

The tournament involved the Tigers, Rabbitohs, Roosters and Manly, as well as New Zealand, playing as the Vodafone Warriors PDRL, and who went on to win the final 6-0 over the Tigers.

PDRLNZ ambassador James Gavet was on hand to present the trophy.

The game is a modified version of league for players with a physical disability who wouldn't otherwise be able to play. It does not shy away from the impact, collision and physicality of league, but has full contact, partial contact and touch elements, so that it caters for a wide spectrum of impairments, including amputees, cerebral palsy, neuromuscular disorders, limb deficiencies and acquired brain injuries.

The rules allow two able bodied players a team, and provide for both male and female players.

In New Zealand, initial efforts to form a team date back to 2014. But PDRL can genuinely lay claim to being Australian. It was started back in 2010 and has the support of the NRL and its clubs.

Following on from its initial success, PDRLNZ continued to create history in February, sending a team to the 2018 Commonwealth Championships in Brisbane, with the New Zealand squad playing a world first PDRL international Tri-test series against Australia and the Commonwealth All Stars.

The Commonwealth Championships was an amazing experience with players from Auckland, Christchurch, Rotorua, Taupo and New South Wales all earning the right wear the New Zealand jersey.

The first test was a true Anzac battle, with a communication breakdown by NZ letting in the only try of the match, giving Australia a 6-0 win.

That was the only try conceded by NZ in the entire series, but it was their downfall. The final against Australia was locked at 0-0 at the end of golden point, but Australia's superior points differential meant they were awarded the gold, and New Zealand silver.

But it's not just on the field where PDRLNZ is leaving its mark. Founder Sandra Hickey says many players doubt they can play league.

"But we are proud to say PDRLNZ is having a radical impact on the physically disabled community, inspiring many players to not only grow physically, but also boosting their mental health, self-confidence and social interaction along the way."

Having strengthened its board, further support from within league is seen as critical. The passing of Masters founder Phil Campbell has left a hole for PDRLNZ to fill, and it is trying to identify someone as a top priority.

PDRLNZ's main goals are to find more players, start a local competition, and find more league connections to help it network and grow the game.

Corporate sponsorship and support to ensure it can field a team at the inaugural PDRL Emerging Nations World Championships in Sydney in October is also paramount.

The Vodafone Warriors continue their support by hosting an upcoming "Have a go" day at Mt Smart on 16 June from 10.30am to 12 noon. Those interested, especially those with a physical disability, are encouraged to come along and meet the NZ PDRL squad, and have a go.

The trophy won by the Vodafone Warriors PDRL team will be on display.

You can register at COMMUNITY@WARRIORS.KIWI.

Where To From Here

By David Kemeys

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



WITH THE Warriors on the bye there is not much else to talk about than the looming second half of the season.

There is zero doubt we are way ahead of where we thought we might be - eight and four.

It's more normal in recent years for us to be wondering where our next win might come from.

We have displayed a rare ability to comeback from crushing defeats, and I fear we might need to.

Sitting in fifth, one of two three things is going to happen.

One, we are going to kick on, and sadly I just cannot see that happening. But then again, I had no concept we might do as well as we have either.

Two, we will win some, lose some and manage to stay in the eight, which happens to be my preferred scenario.

Three, we will drop our bundle.

Our horrible lack of consistency in recent weeks is a very real cause for concern, especially given the nature of some of the beatings we have taken.

So it's probably best to have a look at what lies ahead.

Sea Eagles (away), Cowboys (away), Sharks (home) Panthers (away), Broncos (away), Storm (home),

Titans (away), Dragons (away), Knights (home), Bulldogs (away), Panthers (home), Raiders (home).

It does not make for pretty reading really.

Even the most miserable bastard would have to be a little bit positive about how we have gone so far, but it will all count for nothing if we fail to kick on.

You would think another six wins would get us there.

We have Manly in Christchurch and you never know which Manly side is going to turn up, but on the other side, you don't know which Warriors side is going to turn up at the moment either.

But I will go out on a limb and say we will get the points in this one. We will need to make it five wins needed.

In that run in are the Titans, who are awful, the Dogs, who aren't much better, and the Cowboys, who are struggling like crazy, but we have them in Townsville.

So if we can beat Manly and then the Townsville hoodoo, we will need four wins and our season will be well on course.

Sadly I can't see much joy in the following month- Sharks, Panthers, Broncos and Storm.

That's when we hit the Titans, so mark that as a must win. Do so and it will be three needed.

Write off the Dragons (away), but bank the points from the Knights at home, two wins needed.

We can go to Sydney and beat the Dogs...just one win to go.

Continued on next page...

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It could all rest on the final two weeks of our campaign, and if we can beat the Panthers or the Raiders – better still both, at home.

No matter which way I try to carve it, it is going to be squeaky bum time.

Given they I would struggle to tip wet cement out of a wheelbarrow, all this could of course be total bloody nonsense.

But please, options one and two I can live with, in fact would be delighted with, but option three and a total loss of form would be a bitter pill to swallow.

There's the Kiwis test in Denver to throw into the mix, the Origin period, injuries and who knows what else, but you would have to believe after what we have shown so far, we can end the drought and play finals footy.

Highs And Lows

If we are looking back at the first half of the season, then what was the high point. That one is easy. Beating the Dragons was exceptional. The defensive effort that time was nothing short of epic, and even coach Stephen Kearney, notoriously difficult to please, rated it as a highlight of his coaching career. Cast your mind back and remember we were without Shaun Johnson and Solomone Kata, and lost Tohu Harris to injury early in the game, and had to play with 12 men after Blake Green got sent to the sin bin.

The Dragons had all the ball and exerted a lot of pressure but we got the points in one that we had no right to win whatsoever.

The low point is harder to settle on because you could take your pick of thoroughly awful losses to the Broncos, Souths, Roosters and Storm.

In truth we were absolute cack in all of them, but if you had to single one out it would have to be the Roosters at Mt Smart.

Sure we were dreadful less than a week after beating the Dragons when Melbourne annihilated us, but no side would have lived with the Storm that day.

Against the Roosters we looked like a side bereft of ideas. Also I hate Latrine Mitchell.

So the best, easy, Roger Tuivasa-Sheck has been amazing, but I also want to throw in a shout for the largely unheralded Leivaha Pulu, who we have missed dreadfully since his injury. Blake Green has silenced any talk of Ata Hingano, that's for sure, and Tohu Harris is a massive upgrade on Ryan Hoffman.

The disappointments, harder, but Solomone Kata could do with contributing a good deal more, and I don't think anyone would be too upset if the props gave us a bit more go forward and steel either.

When we have lost we have been dominated physically. It might be a bit unkind to blame the forwards, but you don't have to be a league genius to know that whoever wins the ruck usually wins the game.

Welcome Back Shaun

Good news on the injury front. Halfback Shaun Johnson is on track for Manly in Christchurch, after missing the last three games with an injury.

It has been frustrating for fans, so imagine how tough Johnson is doing it, after only featuring in six of our 12 games.

More on the next page...

Congratulations Roger And Ashley

Congratulations to Roger Tuivasa-Sheck and fiancée Ashley Walker on the birth of a daughter. Roger was on his Instagram account thanking everyone for the support, and even posted a very nice picture of his bundle of joy.

“Support has been unreal,” he wrote. “Ash and bub doing really well and damn respect to all you mothers out there.”

No Place For Cheap Shots

Lots of talk from former Warrior James Maloney, who wants sin-bins for deliberate late shots on play-makers.

Anyone who has seen the late shots on Johnathan Thurston must be scratching their heads, and in fairness, JT is not one of the games whingers, so when he came out and asked if it would take him breaking a rib for the NRL to act, surely it hit home.

The North Queensland captain has been laid out in successive weeks, and neither shot was pretty.

He got belted by Melbourne's Sam Kasiano, who copped one-week ban, then got wasted by Jack Gosiewski long after passing the ball.

Gosiewski got charged, which means five-eighths of bugger-all, because he is out for six weeks with injury anyway.

Maloney said it was time NRL officials started taking action. “I saw the one on replay and it was pretty ordinary against JT. It was very late.”

Players need to put pressure on ball players but you have to draw the line.

Andrew Johns is another who has called for heftier punishments, indicating he thought the approach was deliberate, given it not only discouraged players from taking on the line, but also wiped them out for the next play.

“There's got to be some long suspensions, and then they'll stop.”

You Have To Admire Him

I am not in the least religious but I have to respect Melbourne Storm back Young Tonumaipaea, who will quit in July to become a Mormon missionary. Tonumaipaea plans a two-year mission to Germany and will leave after the State of Origin.

He represented Samoa at last year's Rugby League World Cup.

“As I have matured I've come to learn that football is not everything in my life.”

Niki Schuck

Received a message from Niki Schuck, who was until recently on the board.

It seems Niki, good league convert that she is, has been doing good deeds.

She organised for a hat for Lou Hill, who lives in Wellington in a retirement village, and who is a massive Warriors fan.

Niki knows his daughter-in-law so thought she'd arrange a signed hat for him from his favourite player.

It turns out, despite thinking the 2018 team is fantastic, he feels no one comes close to Stacey Jones!

So Stacey, being an all round good man, happily obliged.

Apparently Lou couldn't stop smiling when he was given the cap, and the staff at the retirement home say he now lives in it.

One very happy Warriors fan.

The photo shows Lou with his son Jase, who went to visit him this long weekend, and yep, Lou has his cap on.





Johnson to bring up 150-game milestone in Christchurch

by Richard Becht

5.00pm, Saturday, June 9, 2018
AMI Stadium, Christchurch

SHAUN JOHNSON has been named to make his 150th NRL milestone appearance in the Vodafone Warriors' 14th-round clash against Manly Warringah at AMI Stadium in Christchurch on Saturday (5.00pm kick-off).

The 27-year-old has been stalled on 149 games since an ankle injury picked up in the 70th minute of the club's 26-4 win over Wests Tigers in Auckland on May 5.

After scoring his 61st career try in the victory, Johnson was then forced to miss the last three outings against the Sydney Roosters, Parramatta and South Sydney.

With his seventh appearance this year, the club's record points-scorer (825 points) will become the 12th member of the Vodafone Warriors' 150-game club having made his debut against the Roosters in 2011 and his 100th against the same opposition in 2015.

Johnson's return results in Peta Hiku being switched back to the centres while there are two changes among the forwards.

After starting in the 10-30 loss to South Sydney, Simon Mannering goes back to the bench while 19-year-old Isaiah Papali'i has been named to start in the second row. Ruled out for the next three weeks is utility Jazz Tevaga (shoulder) which sees Karl Lawton remain on the interchange. The four players included on the extended bench are Gerard Beale, Mason Lino, Sam Lisone and Ligi Sao.

The Vodafone Warriors go into the match lying fourth on the ladder on 18 points, two behind Penrith and St George Illawarra. With an 8-4 win-loss record, it's the first time since 2011 that the Vodafone Warriors have begun the second half of a season with more wins than losses (and only the second time since 2002).

While the Vodafone Warriors are coming off as bye, the Sea Eagles were in action last week, going down 12-26 to North Queensland a week after losing 20-21 in extra time to Canberra the previous round. Those results belied the form which saw them beat the Brisbane Broncos (38-24) and the Melbourne Storm (24-4) in rounds 10 and 11.

VODAFONE WARRIORS | 150 APPEARANCES

288 Simon Mannering (2005-2018)
261 Stacey Jones (1995-2005 & 2009)
226 Manu Vatuvei (2004-2017)
212 Ben Matulino (2008-2017)
195 Logan Swann (1997-2003 & 2007-2008)
188 Jacob Lillyman (2009-2017)
185 Lance Hohaia (2002-2011)
173 Sam Rapira (2006-2015)
170 Awen Guttenbeil (1996-2006)
159 Wairangi Koopu (1999 & 2001-2008)
150 Micheal Luck (2006-2012)

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 James Gavet
9 Issac Luke
10 Agnatius Paasi
11 Isaiah Papali'i
12 Tohu Harris
13 Adam Blair
Interchange:
14 Karl Lawton
15 Chris Satae
16 Bunty Afoa
17 Simon Mannering
18 Gerard Beale
20 Mason Lino
21 Sam Lisone
23 Ligi Sao



THE SOUTH Sydney Rabbitohs are set to come through the testing State of Origin period well placed in the race to the semi finals. Despite having two of their players, Damien Cook and Angus Crichton, on State of Origin duty, the Rabbits were too good for the Sharks on Friday night, winning 22-14. The Souths forwards are an impressive group, with the three Burgess brothers dominating the tight work around the play the ball. The brothers were well supported against the Sharks by 33 year old John Sutton, who began his NRL career in 2004 as a five eighth. Only five games away from reaching the 300 first grade game mark, second rower Sutton ran for 150 metres on Friday night. For more than a month now, the South Sydney backs have been as good as any other set in the competition and they continued this form in the Sharks game. One big stat to come from the game was the post contact metres. Souths had 453 to Cronulla's 373 and a lot of these metres came from powerful bursts by the Burgess boys.

The Rabbits lost three of their first five games under their new coach, Anthony Seibold. Born in Rockhampton Queensland, Seibold, 43, is in his first head coaching role this year. But he has settled in well and his players are obviously responding to his methods. He began his coaching career with the Mackay Cutters in Central Queensland from 2011 to 2012 and then worked as an assistant coach with the Storm between 2013 and 2015. He was an assistant at Manly in 2016 and joined Souths in a similar position last year. He also worked with the junior Kangaroos in 2015 and the Queensland State of Origin team in 2016-17.

The third and last State of Origin game this year will be played at Brisbane on 11 July. After beating the Sharks on Friday, the Rabbits meet the Titans this Friday, 8 June, followed by Parramatta on Thursday 14 June. Then comes the stand alone weekend, 21-24 June during which there are no club games scheduled. Souths have the Cowboys on 1 July and have a bye the following weekend in round 17. After State of Origin game three, they meet the Bulldogs on 14 July. All their remaining opponents in the State of Origin period are below them on the ladder and this gives the Rabbits an excellent chance of being well established in the top four in the countdown to the end of season play-offs.

I am a big fan of the three players who were inducted at the NSW Rugby League Hall of Fame dinner at Star City in Sydney on Monday night 28 May. The three men are Keith Holman MBE, Ken Irvine and Steve Rogers. All three are no longer with us but their contributions to Australian and NSW Rugby League, were immense. Born on 11 September 1925, Keith was a tough and clever halfback, who played 35 Tests, 33 matches for NSW and 203 first grade games for the Western Suburbs Magpies between 1948 and 1961. After retiring, he coached and refereed. As a referee, he controlled the 1971 Grand Final between Souths and St George, plus both Australia-New Zealand Tests in Australia in 1972. Named as one of Australia's greatest 100 players in 2008, Keith had a tough childhood, being brought up in a shanty at Yarra Bay in Sydney, during the depression years. He served as a leading aircraftsman with the RAAF in World War Two and died on 11 October 2011, aged 86.

Ken Irvine still holds the record for most tries scored in Sydney first grade football. In 236 top grade matches with North Sydney then Manly he collected 212 tries. In 33 Tests for Australia he scored 33 tries, while for NSW, he finished with 30 tries in 31 games. He was named as one of Australia's greatest 100 players in 2008, while he was also selected as a winger in the Australian team of the century. In 1963 at Dubbo, which is about 400 kms north west of Sydney, he set a world professional record of 9.3 seconds for 100 yards. Ken spent the last few years of his life battling Leukaemia and passed away, aged just 50, on 22 December 1990.

Steve Rogers made his name as a top class all round centre, but he was also highly proficient in many other positions. In 1981, while playing with St. George, he won the Dally M lock of the year award. Steve played 24 Tests for Australia, 21 matches for NSW and 231 first grade games with Cronulla and St. George. He won the Rothmans Medal in 1975, was the Dally M Player of the Year in 1981 and was named as one of Australia's greatest 100 players. Steve died on 3 January 2006, aged 51. His younger son, Matt is a double international with 11 Rugby League Tests and 45 Rugby Union Tests.

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It was a nice touch to see family members of the three inductees, recognised and interviewed by Anthony Minichiello. Ken Irvine's wife Val, Steve Rogers' older son, Don and Keith Holman's wife Hazel and daughter Sue, enjoyed the night.

A fine, but cold night has been forecasted for tonight's opening State of Origin game at the Melbourne Cricket Ground. NSW is confident that they can win the series this season and if they are to do that, a win tonight is probably a must. The record State of Origin attendance of 91,513 was set at the Melbourne Cricket Ground for Game Two of the 2015 series. The NRL is hopeful that the attendance tonight will be more than 80,000.

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

With less than 3 days 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

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) head along to the Gala Dinner. Members of both teams will be in attendance along with Frank Endacott and guest speaker, Graham Lowe. It is being hosted at Sixty6 on Peterborough.

Grab your tickets or tables here: <http://walcoevents.nz/book-now-w-dinner/>

MANLY V WARRIORS DINNER

THURS. 7 JUNE, KICK-OFF 6.30PM

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TICKETS FROM \$185+GST PP OR TABLES OF 10 \$1750 +GST

GUEST SPEAKER GRAHAM LOWE



The (Sea) Eagles Have Landed...

By Michael Johnstone

Christchurch Mayor Lianne Dalziel and Manly captain Daly Cherry-Evans get a close-up look at the Te Ātanga, the Broadhurst-Shelford Trophy which will be on the line on Saturday night against the Vodafone Warriors. Photos: Kevin Clarke

MANLY ARRIVED in Christchurch on Tuesday ahead of their game against the Vodafone Warriors on Saturday. On Tuesday the team received a rousing welcome at the Ngā Hau e Whā National Marae. The guests from Sydney's Northern Beaches were welcomed by Ngāi Tahu representatives as well as Christchurch Mayor Lianne Dalziel, Deputy Mayor Andrew Turner, councillor Glenn Livingstone and Christchurch East MP Poto Williams. As a token of their appreciation for the welcome and food, Manly CEO, Lyall Gorman presented a signed Ngai Tahu jersey to Ngai Tahu leaders

The players also got to see the Te Ātanga, the Broadhurst-Shelford Trophy which will be on the line on Saturday night against the Vodafone Warriors. Following the powhiri they jumped back on the bus and headed to Haeata Community College for a coaching clinic and signing session with local junior rugby league players and coaches.

The Sea Eagles have a busy schedule of community engagement, media and training in the 4 days leading into the game. On Wednesday the Sea Eagles had a big training session at Crusaders HQ (hoping that some of the Crusaders success rubbed off on them) before splitting into groups of 4 players, jumping in various cars and visiting 12 local schools in a community blitz. There they delivered NRL's Well-being Program and distributed posters and other giveaways.

Later on Wednesday night Trent Barrett and John Cartwright hosted a State of Origin night at Sixty6 on Peterborough, answering questions from all those in attendance about their Origin experiences.

The Vodafone Warriors are also in town and are also visiting a number of schools, in conjunction with Canterbury Rugby League.

It's a great effort by Walco Events to bring NRL back to Christchurch and Canterbury so all the league supporters in the South can again feel the excitement of top level rugby league so soon after the Rugby League World Cup matches in Christchurch. Christchurch people have supported the NRL game with a big crowd of over 15K expected. There are still tickets available in all categories, priced from \$39 or \$19 for children. Tickets can be purchased from ticketek.co.nz/manlywarriors or to get the very best value seats get tickets in the Warriors Supporter Zone which are priced from \$39 and are undercover

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

State Of Origin Reborn?

By John Coffey QSM

Author of ten rugby league books, Christchurch Press sports writer (44 years),
NZ correspondent for Rugby League Week (Australia) and Open Rugby (England)



MANY PEOPLE living south of the border between Queensland and New South Wales have been walking around with increasingly silly grins on their faces since Jonathan Thurston and Cooper Cronk made it known months ago they were finishing up with representative football. Those smiles turned into raucous laughter when Maroons captain Cameron Smith also retired shortly before last week's naming of the Origin teams.

At last, it was said, Blues fans would shake off the, um, blues inflicted by more than a decade of Maroons dominance in what had previously been a closely-contested rivalry pitting State against State and Mate against Mate. Between 1980 and 2005 only one or two wins ever separated them. But after that Thurston, Cronk and Smith conspired with Billy Slater to form the most influential "spine" in rugby league history.

Now Slater has withdrawn from tonight's match at the Melbourne Cricket Ground because of injury, having already planned to disappear after this season. NSW folk will point out that despite the presence of the big four their generally despised team was only once whitewashed when losing 11 of the last 12 series. In 2017 the Blues were victorious 28-4 in the opening encounter before suffering 18-16 and 22-6 defeats.

Cynics would also suggest the injury which knocked perennial scapegoat Mitchell Pearce out of contention further boosts NSW's prospects of bringing back the good times. With no Slater, Thurston, Cronk and Smith on one side of the field and no Pearce on the other side, it all points to a victory for the Blues, right? But the more astute judges have not been so much grinning as looking perplexed since the teams were revealed.

Enter Brad Fittler, the successor to long-suffering Laurie Daley as NSW coach, who brought with him a new broom. Fittler has selected no less than 11 debutants – three-quarters Tom Trbojevic, Latrell Mitchell, James Roberts and Josh Addo-Carr, halfback Nathan Cleary, hooker Damien Cook, prop Reagan Campbell-Gillard, lock Jack de Belin, and interchange trio Paul Vaughan, Angus Crichton and Tyrone Peachey.

On paper it is an exciting list. But no football, especially Origin, is ever won on paper. While Fittler has been widely praised for having the courage to go with his instincts and pick players on form rather than reputation, no-one knows how they will stand up to the unique pressures of Origin. At least Fittler will not be forever looking over his shoulder to check if Blake Ferguson and Josh Dugan have gone out on a pub crawl!

Queenslanders can argue specialist club fullback Trbojevic is playing out of position on the wing, and that Mitchell, Roberts and Addo-Carr are thrilling attackers who will have their defensive frailties exposed by more experienced rivals. While Thurston, Cronk and Smith have gone, the imposing Greg Inglis returns from injury to the Queensland centres -- and an even more determined Slater is expected back for the other games.

Kevin Walters, who smoothly transitioned Queensland from the Mal Meninga era two years ago, named three newcomers of his own in hooker Andrew McCullough, second-rower Felise Kaufusi and interchange forward Jai Arrow. Kaufusi comes in for the injured Matt Gillett, while Arrow was preferred ahead of Tim Glasby from last year's series decider. Walters also ignored injury-troubled veterans Matt Scott and Darius Boyd.

That left Walters with 13 of the 17 players who appeared in the 2017 clincher. McCullough has served a 200-game apprenticeship with the Brisbane Broncos; Inglis has the mana among Queenslanders to succeed Smith as the on-field leader; wing Valentine Holmes is expected to be the preferred goalkicker even though he does not have that job at club level. In contrast, NSW has two real sharp-shooters in James Maloney and Cleary.

At 20, Cleary is the poster boy of the series. The former Warriors ball boy – from when father Ivan was coaching at Mount Smart – seemed to be out of contention when sidelined for eight weeks with a knee injury. But he needed only two matches for Penrith to convince Fittler he could not be ignored. In Cleary's absence, Maloney lifted his own game to new heights and they now have the Panthers sitting atop the NRL ladder.

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As I write this NSW is at its shortest odds on the Aussie TAB (\$1.55 against Queensland's \$2.50) since the third game of 2005, and at \$1.50 (to Queensland's \$2.60) to win the series. But NSW has never handled favouritism comfortably and I have a sneaking suspicion the Queenslanders are about to wipe those smiles from their faces. The other Origin games are in Sydney (Sunday, June 24) and Brisbane (Wednesday, July 11).



**PHYSICAL DISABILITIES
HAVE A GO DAY**
Skills, drills and games!

Saturday 16th June
10:30am - 12pm
Mt Smart Field 4
O'Rorke Road
Mt Smart Stadium

People with a physical disability.
No rugby league experience needed.
Bring training gear, drink bottle, boots
and a mouthguard if you have one.
Register at community@warriors.kiwi



COMMUNITY WARRIORS

**Harvey
Norman**



PHYSICAL DISABILITY RUGBY LEAGUE

PDRLNZ and the Vodafone Warriors invite you to

Come along, bring your friends, have a go!!

Come meet the New Zealand Physical Disability Rugby League squad
and have a go at PDRL. The Inaugural PDRL 9's trophy
won by the PDRL Vodafone Warriors will be on display.

PDRL caters for all physical disabilities and ages and is a fun way to
engage with NZ's beloved sport.

Check out www.pdrlnz.kiwi or PDRLNZ on facebook



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SHARKS STORM KNIGHTS NEWCASTLE PANTHERS RAIDERS



By Miles Davis

The Originals - Warrior No. 16 & 17: Jason Mackie and Martin Moana

(Left) Jason Mackie in action for the Warriors against the Tigers, 1995.

(Right) Martin Moana in action for the Warriors, 1995.

Photo www.photosport.nz

WARRIOR NO. 16 Jason Mackie started his rugby league career playing for the Takahiwai Warriors in Northland. It was a club that his whanau had a long association with the Mackie name being part of the club's original line-up in 1932.

A driving force in Northland rugby league he led Takahiwai Warriors to the club title as a player/coach and played 18 times for Northland, skippering them to North Island 2nd Division title in 1993. Such was his devotion to the Northland side that in 1991, while he was based in Auckland with the Navy, he used to travel up to Whangarei for training. In all he played 18 games for his province, scoring 14 tries.

In 1990 he was selected for New Zealand Maori squad for their game against the touring Great Britain side then travelled to Tonga to take part in the Pacific Cup, losing the final 26-18 to Western Samoa.

In 1993 he was selected for the Kiwis tour to Great Britain, the only 2nd Division player in the squad. In the opening Test of the tour, against Wales, he became the first Northland player to earn a Test cap for the Kiwis. To make the occasion even more auspicious he scored the opening try in a 24-19 victory. He also played in all 3 tests against Great Britain. He played his last test for the Kiwis in the final Test of the tour against France in Carcassone and was once again on the score-sheet in a 36-11 win.

In 1994 he was signed by the Auckland Warriors for their inaugural season the following year and moved south to join the Auckland Vulcans in the Lion Red Cup as a precursor to his ARL debut. It was not a great season for the Vulcans as they ended the regular season in 5th place and were knocked out in the play-offs by the Canterbury Country Cardinals.

His time at the Warriors was not a great success for Mackie. He started on the interchange bench for the first two games of the 1995 season and only made 5 appearances, all from the bench. After playing the 1996 season in reserve grade he left the Warriors in June of that year.

A small but historical part of the Warriors story and a major figure in Northland rugby league, Mackie was last known to be working in the mining industry in Queensland.

Warrior No. 17 Martin Moana was born in Huntly and played his early league with the Huntly South Chargers. An obvious talent from an early age he played for New Zealand at U15's and U17's before becoming a Junior Kiwi in 1992, being part of the side that defeated their Australian counterparts that season.

After signing for the Auckland Warriors he toured Australia with their development side before lining up with the Waikato Cougars in the 1994 Lion Red Cup. Moana had a stellar season scoring 14 tries in 22 games for the Cougars as they finished the regular season in 2nd place. Unfortunately injuries took their toll in the play-offs and they went down 24-10 to North Harbour in the qualifying final and then were knocked out 32-6 by the Canterbury Country Cardinals.

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He then gained selection for the New Zealand Residents tour of Australia and the New Zealand Maori side to take part in the Pacific Cup in Fiji.

He was on the interchange bench for the Warriors' first up game against the Brisbane Broncos in 1995 but went on to make just 6 appearances, all from the bench. His only try came in the Round Five 26-14 loss to the Manly Sea Eagles. That season he also represented New Zealand at the World Sevens tournament.

The 1996 season saw him move to England and join Halifax Blue Sox where he was quickly to become a local legend. In two spells at the club he made 195 appearances and scored 125 tries. In between his two periods at Halifax, Moana became a bit of a nomad playing for Huddersfield, Doncaster and Wakefield Trinity.

In 2003 he received a one month ban for a doping violation (too much ephedrine in the system apparently caused by taking too large a dose of medication). A month after his return from suspension he left Halifax for the 2nd time to join Salford Reds.

He only played 9 games for Salford before rejoining Doncaster for 2004/05. He made 39 appearances for them, scoring 22 tries before moving to the Swinton Lions in 2006. In his first season he was named Player of the Year and in 3 years at the club he made 88 appearances and scored 40 tries.

As well as a career that included over 300 first-class appearances, Moana also represented Aotearoa Maori at the 2000 Rugby League World Cup.

Moana is still based in Halifax where he has been for over 20 years and is heavily involved in the community where he initiated a Charity Rugby League match in support of Prostate Cancer.

Breaking News!

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SHARKS STORM KNIGHTS NEWCASTLE PANTHERS RAIDERS

Warriors' Tenth Match In Christchurch

By John Coffey QSM

Author of ten rugby league books, Christchurch Press sports writer (44 years),
NZ correspondent for Rugby League Week (Australia) and Open Rugby (England)



THE WARRIORS will be making their tenth appearance, and playing their seventh Australian competition match, in Christchurch against Manly-Warringah on Saturday (kick-off 5pm). In turn, the Sea Eagles become the fifth club – after the Sydney Tigers, Wests Tigers, Sydney Roosters and Penrith Panthers – to concede their familiar home surroundings and bring professional rugby league fixtures to the South Island.

In their formative years the Warriors created two rugby league ground attendance records in non-competition games. In January 1995 they made a pioneering visit to the Addington Show Grounds, attracting 12,811 fans and beating a Canterbury XIII 26-12. In February 1996 an estimated 25,000 spectators saw the Warriors go down 22-12 to the Canterbury-Bankstown Bulldogs at Lancaster Park in another pre-season game.

With Super League looming in the mid-1990s, several traditional clubs affixed “Sydney” to their titles in attempts to strengthen their chances of survival should clubs be relegated or relocated. Balmain was among them, so came to Christchurch in June 1996 as the Sydney Tigers. They beat the Warriors 34-22 at Lancaster Park, with former Canterbury and Warriors centre Mike Dorreen thoroughly enjoying his homecoming.

In 1997 the Australian Rugby League and the breakaway Super League ran separate club competitions. Super League also introduced a World Club Challenge involving all first grade teams from both Australia and Britain. Lancaster Park hosted the Warriors’ 16-4 victory over Lancashire club Warrington Wolves, but only 6500 fans were attracted to an overly-ambitious and generally uninspiring competition.

Cantabrians have the Wests Tigers to thank for introducing the NRL to their city. The Tigers came to Lancaster Park for three consecutive seasons from 2004 and, inevitably, Benji Marshall shared top billing with the Warriors. The Tigers were a popular bunch, from coaches Tim Sheens and Royce Simmons, to charismatic halves Marshall and Scott Prince, and young Kiwis Dene Halatau and Bronson Harrison.

Wests Tigers romped home 50-4 in 2004, with prop Mark Tookey scoring the Warriors’ try from a spilt Stacey Jones bomb. In 2005 the Tigers comfortably won 24-6 and wing Todd Byrne claimed the Warriors try. But in 2006, after Ivan Cleary had succeeded Tony Kemp as coach, the Warriors beat the Tigers 26-10 on the back of tries to Awen Gутtenbeil, Jerome Ropati, Clinton Toopi, Brent Webb and Manu Vatuvei.

Crowd attendances were satisfactory to the Tigers, at 16,221 in 2004, 18,421 in 2005 and 14,675 in 2006. But they had won the NRL premiership in 2005 and their supporters were demanding to see more of their heroes at Leichhardt and Campbelltown so the initial three-year agreement was not renewed. To date that has been the longest association between an NRL club and Christchurch and it left many fond memories.

Kevin Locke was the hero of the Warriors’ thrilling 20-18 victory over the Sydney Roosters in 2010. The Sydney Morning Herald described the 20,721 attendance as “astonishing” for a match played in “wind, rain squalls and near-zero temperatures”. Only 30sec remained on the clock when, with the Roosters leading 18-14, Lance Hohaia kicked ahead. Locke raced after the ball and desperately dived as it neared the try-line.

There was no way Locke could slow his momentum on the sodden turf and he sickeningly slammed into a goal post in the act of scoring. It was his third try of the day, alongside one by Vatuvei. The courageous Locke was stretchered off with a hip injury before James Maloney’s conversion sealed the win. The Roosters would have returned to Christchurch had the deadly February 2011 earthquake not wrecked Lancaster Park.

In 2016 Penrith agreed to a multi-year deal to play in Christchurch. The Panthers beat the Warriors 30-18 at AMI Stadium (the former Addington Show Grounds and Rugby League Park) after overcoming a 14-18 half-time deficit in front of a capacity 17,669 crowd. Blake Ayshford, Solomone Kata and Jonathan Wright touched down for the Warriors but Tyrone Peachey replied with three of his own for Penrith.

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Of that Warriors starting line-up only Kata, David Fusitu'a, Shaun Johnson, Jazz Tevaga and James Gavet have played first grade this season. Issac Luke came off the bench. Penrith was to have returned to Christchurch in the following seasons but the fixture vanished from the NRL draw soon after the Kaikoura earthquake in late 2016. Match organiser Justin Wallace has since worked tirelessly to bring Manly to the city.

Other Australian clubs have also spent time in Christchurch. The Cronulla Sharks held pre-season camps in 2002 and 2014 and established links with the Halswell Hornets club. They were also first to spot the potential of current Brisbane Broncos star Jamayne Isaako. About 15 years ago Wayne Bennett brought his Broncos coaching and recruitment staff over to conduct sessions with the Aranui High School sports academy.

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Maori & Toa can't be split in U20 thriller

By ARL

A LAST-MINUTE PENALTY rescued a draw for the Auckland Maori U20 against Toa Samoa Invitational U20, in the curtain-raiser at the 2018 Upright Access Mann Cup.

Samoa opened the scoring at Mt Smart Stadium on six minutes, via powerful prop forward Lene Neemia, but found themselves down 16-6 at the break as the local side struck three times, through fleet-footed half Taane Paki, centre Iloa Ma'afu-Roberts and forward Isaiah Vagana.

Three minutes into the second period the Samoans had a golden chance to claw their way back, after winger Setu Tu burst 70 metres down field, but they couldn't execute and the gap remained 10 at the final 20 minutes approached.

At that point Toa captain Dylan Tavita took matters into his own hands, stepping his way through for a try, although it was quickly cancelled out by Casey Smith's four-pointer at the other end.

Tries to Johnny Falelua-Malio and Jachim Tumu-Makara – both of which were converted by Tavita – gave the Samoans a 24-22 lead, which they looked set to win the game on, before a penalty with a minute left gifted Smith with a kick in front of the posts to tie the game.

Toa Samoa Invitational 24 (Lene Neemia, Dylan Tavita, Johnny Falelua-Malio, Jachim Tumu-Makara tries; Dylan Tavita 4 goals) Auckland Maori 24 (Taane Paki, Iloa Ma'afu-Roberts, William Pompey, Casey Smith tries; Casey Smith 4 goals). At Mt Smart Stadium.



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

The Mad Butchers Weekly NRL Tipping Comp.

By John Holloway

NRL Round 14

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 Rich- mond Leagueie</i>
Weds 6 June Melbourne	Blues v Ma- roons	Maroons	Blues	Maroons	Maroons	Maroons	Blues	Blues
Fri 8 June GIO	Raiders v Panthers	Panthers	Raiders	Raiders	Raiders	Panthers	Panthers	Raiders
Fri 8 June CBUS	Titans v Rabbitohs	Rabbitohs	Rabbitohs	Rabbitohs	Rabbitohs	Rabbitohs	Rabbitohs	Rabbitohs
Sat 9 June AMI Chch	Sea Eagles v Warriors	Warriors	Warriors	Warriors	Warriors	Warriors	Warriors	Warriors
Sat 9 June McDon James	Knights v Roosters	Roosters	Knights	Roosters	Roosters	Roosters	Roosters	Roosters
Sat 9 June TIO Stadium	Eels v Cow- boys	Cowboys	Cowboys	Cowboys	Cowboys	Cowboys	Cowboys	Cowboys
Sun 10 June Sth Cross	Sharks v Tigers	Sharks	Sharks	Sharks	Sharks	Sharks	Sharks	Sharks
Sun 10 June AAMI	Storm v Broncos	Storm	Storm	Storm	Storm	Storm	Storm	Broncos
Mon 11 June ANZ	Bulldogs v Dragons	Dragons	Dragons	Dragons	Dragons	Dragons	Dragons	Dragons

Picks last week	3/4	2/4	1/4	2/4	1/4	2/4	1/4
Total picks	59	60	58	52	54	61	53

The Changing Of The Guard...

I WAS AWAY with the Whanau in the Coromandels for the long weekend and fair to say I did not enhance the Tan! Rain rain rain and a shortened footy programme to boot. What I did note thru the murk was a few players rapidly reaching the sell by date. Freddie Fittler is clearly of the same mind and I think Maroons man Walters is starting to see it the same way albeit his hand has been more forced by Smith, Thurston, Cronk and shortly Wonderboy Billy Slater. If I have to name names I guess notables on the weekend were the aging Sharkie duo Luke Lewis and Paul Gallen. Lewis is defying age to an extent as he has still got great linking skills that help combine forwards to backs movements and retains that old instinct for the nuances of match flow but his involvement is dropping away. Gallen will never lack heart but is struggling to keep up with the pace of the current game perhaps it's the weight of the amount of strapping he has to wear these days. He still wants to charge up the guts at every opportunity but he has become easier to stop and less effective all round. His famed tackling output is falling short of the mark as well, with pacy and sharp stepping opposition regularly finding him out. In their latest outing Bunnies youngster Cameron Murray who looks about 13yrs old and 75 kilos ringing wet ran rings around him. Souths boom colt second rower Angus Chrichton away on Origin duty would have embarrassed the old guys up even more. While both players have had fantastic careers I am sure Shire Coach Flanagan has secret thoughts of the new-blood he could snap up with the massive hunk of Salary cap these two old Bulls command.

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If you are into the NRL Fantasy Team game you get a very accurate reading from points given each week as to the performance of every player. Numbers on their tackles, hitups, metres run, offloads, breaks, errors, tries, kicks/metres etc. The big picture. A simple snapshot every week with averages across the season to date. Some of the usual guaranteed big gun scorers Cam Smith (CS9), Cronk, Thurston, Gallen, Dugan, Woods, Morgan, Tedesco are way down or up and down this year while a host of relative newbies Cook, Chrichton, Ponga, Cleary, the Turbo twins, Matterson, Marsters, Aitken, Koroisau and co are standing tall. As Bobby Dylan says "The times they are a-changin'" As stated earlier Billy Slater is retiring (from Origin at least) after this series and yet to be fair he defies my logic as he is still playing great footy...for now. Young gun maroon Kaylen Ponga given his chance may hasten his retreat.

So that's my rant this week, mind you some might look at my Tipping scores this year and suggest that I have a peek in the mirror myself !! Yes 1 from 4 this week for the old High-Tackle not exactly exhilarating, bugger. Tarsh was the best again!! 3 from 4...The Flava star along with Big Joe Vagana are putting pressure on the Whistleblower Nifty Nev with his nose in front on 61 points. As usual I am on the Maroons on Wednesday night but the changing of the Blues guard has me worried.

Vodafone Warriors ISP and Jersey Flegg both win in Sydney

By Joe Williams - ISP Team Manager

THE VODAFONE Warriors ISP held off a solid start for the Wentworthville Magpies before piling on the points at ANZ Stadium, emerging 36-6 victors in Round 13 of the Intrust Super Premiership.

Chanel Harris-Tavita, Tevita Satae and Anthony Gelling all had heavy involvements in the Warriors' win, which moves the side into seventh place on the ladder. The result, meanwhile, keeps the Magpies one spot lower and out of the top eight.

After three straight weekends of travel to Sydney the Vodafone Warriors ISP get a well deserved rest this weekend with the side having a bye before they travel to Newcastle for their Round 15 clash next weekend.

Meanwhile a second half scoring spree netting 22 points in as many minutes carried the Vodafone Junior Warriors to an impressive 32-16 win over Parramatta in their 13th-round Jersey Flegg Cup encounter at Ringers Park in Sydney on Saturday.

The win lifted the Vodafone Junior Warriors within three points of the top eight in a season in which they've been close to victory in three matches, losing one match by one point, another by four and another by six.

The Ricky Henry-coached side is finally back on home soil this weekend for a 14th-round battle against Mounties at QBE North Harbour Stadium next Saturday (1.00pm kick-off).

VODAFONE JUNIOR WARRIORS v MOUNTIES

1.00pm, Saturday, June 9

**QBE North Harbour Stadium,
Albany**

Vodafone Junior Warriors	10 Wesley Veikoso
1 Kayal Iro	11 Brody Tamarua
2 Harley Maynard	12 Tyler Slade (C)
3 Patrick Elia	13 Tom Ale
4 Carlos Henry	Interchange:
5 Edward Kosi	14 Richard Toa'i
6 Dakohta Taimani	15 Sione Tuipulotu
7 Eiden Ackland	16 Graeme Patu-Vaega'au
8 Preston Riki	17 Soane Hufanga
9 Lewis Sio	Coach Ricky Henry

This Warriors Life Top 10 - Warriors' Best Goalkickers By Percentage

By Will Evans

THE WARRIORS' current goalkicking depth is as strong as its ever been, with first choice Shaun Johnson, halfback deputy Mason Lino and third-stringer Issac Luke all above average off the tee.

But who are the sharpest shooters in Warriors history?

THISWARRIORSLIFE.COM TOP 10 – WARRIORS' BEST GOALKICKERS BY PERCENTAGE (Minimum 20 Attempts)

10. Frano Botica (1995) – 19 goals from 26 attempts (73.08%)

Former All Black Botica set a host of pointscore records in five seasons at Wigan, kicking over 800 goals for the British club. The utility back reunited with former Wigan coach John Monie midway through the Auckland Warriors' 1995 debut campaign and assumed the goalkicking responsibilities from Gene Ngamu, who was batting at a modest 60 percent.

Botica notched three hauls of five-plus goals in his first four games for the Warriors but suffered a season-ending knee injury in his fifth appearance. The seven-Test Kiwi returned to England with Castleford before switching back to rugby union.

9. Sione Faumuina (2002-06) – 33 goals from 44 attempts (73.33%)

A surprise inclusion in this list, gifted ball-player Faumuina was the Warriors' first-choice goalkicker during their troubled 2004 campaign.

The back-rower/five-eighth/centre top-scored for the club that year with 68 points, including 32 goals at a 76 percent success rate. At one stage he landed 21 goals in succession without a miss.

Despite being a first-grade regular in 2005, Faumuina was relieved of the duties by Stacey Jones – a 70 percent kicker during his premiership career. After 88 games for the Warriors, Faumuina had stints with North Queensland and Castleford.

8. Tony Martin (2004-07) – 109 goals from 147 attempts (74.15%)

Underrated centre Martin did a bit of goalkicking during Melbourne's inaugural 1998 campaign but the likes of Matt Geyer and Tasesa Lavea were preferred in subsequent seasons. And despite booting 179 goals in three seasons for London Broncos, he was used sparingly after joining the Warriors in 2004.

But following Stacey Jones' departure Martin took over as the Warriors' goalkicker, top-scoring with 160 points – including 68 goals at 76 percent – in 2006. Twice that season he landed nine goals in a match.

Martin started 2007 with the responsibilities, slotting 34 goals from 45 attempts, but a spell on the sidelines allowed Michael Witt to take over and go on one of the greatest goalkicking streaks in history.

7. Shaun Johnson (2011-18) – 285 goals from 383 attempts (74.41%)

The Warriors' all-time leading scorer with 825 points, Johnson took over as the Warriors' goalkicker in 2013 after James Maloney left the club.

Continued on next page...

Johnson's tallies of 67 goals and 177 points in 2013 remain his career-best, while a run of 21 consecutive goals helped him attain a 75 percent success rate. He slotted nine-from-nine against Canberra and eight-from-eight against Parramatta in 2014, but his best season statistically was 2017, when he struck 45 goals from 57 attempts at 79 percent.

This year so far he has kicked 20 goals from 28 attempts at a slightly under-par 71 percent.

6. James Maloney (2010-12) – 222 goals from 294 attempts (75.51%)

One of only two Warriors to score 200 points in a season (206 in 2011) and the first player to kick 200 goals for the club, Maloney landed his first 19 shots at goal in a row after arriving in Auckland in 2010 – including eight-from-eight in a club-record-equalling 28-point haul against Brisbane.

Maloney booted 82 goals at 75 percent in 2011, none more important than the sideline conversion against Melbourne in the preliminary final that sealed the Warriors' passage to the grand final. But two difficult misses stymied his side's late comeback against Manly in the decider.

While his percentage at the Warriors was more than satisfactory, it pales in comparison to his record of 529 goals at 84 percent in subsequent stints with Sydney Roosters, Cronulla and Penrith.

5. Mason Lino (2015-18) – 16 goals from 21 attempts (76.19%)

Lino's five-from-six performance proved crucial in the Warriors' 2014 NYC grand final eclipse of the Broncos and he has been a prolific point-scorer at ISP level over the past four seasons.

Only kicking once in his first nine NRL appearances (two-from-three against Canberra last year), the half-back deputy has handled the goalkicking duties in his five NRL outings to date in 2018. He nailed seven goals from as many attempts in the 30-6 rout of the Roosters in Round 4.

4. Issac Luke (2016-18) – 46 goals from 59 attempts (77.97%)

A decent back-up during his nine-season stay at South Sydney – kicking 134 goals at 68 percent – Luke has been a top-shelf fill-in for Johnson since landing at the Warriors.

Taking over during the second half of 2016 as Johnson battled leg injuries, Luke slotted 28 goals at 82 percent – including a magnificent sideline conversion on the buzzer to send their clash with the Raiders into golden point.

The hooker managed 17 goals from 23 attempts in 2017 and had a nudge against former club Souths in Round 12, kicking one from two.

3. Ivan Cleary (2000-02) – 195 goals from 239 attempts (81.59%)

Jason Taylor's presence prevented Ivan Cleary from displaying his goalkicking wares during two seasons at North Sydney, but his 722 points in four seasons with Sydney City (including 303 goals) featured a then-premiership-record 284 points in 1998.

Injury ruined Cleary's initial 2000 campaign at the Warriors, but he landed 80 goals amongst a club-record 173 points in the club's breakout 2001 season. He extended the mark in 2002 with 105 goals (at 83 percent) and 242 points – Warriors records that still stand.

Cleary equalled Gene Ngamu's club record with 28 points against Northern Eagles in 2002, including 12-from-12 with the boot. He was just the sixth player in history to kick 12 or more goals in a first-grade match and the first since Manly legend Graham Eadie 27 years earlier. No player has managed the feat since.

2. Matthew Ridge (1997-99) – 103 goals from 124 attempts (83.06%)

Helping revolutionise the importance of goalkickers in rugby league along with a host of fellow union converts in the early-1990s, former All Black Ridge kicked 477 goals for Manly at a shade under 80 percent.

Though the abrasive Ridge's much-hyped stint at the Warriors was a rank disappointment – plagued by injuries, suspensions, indifferent form and off-field ructions – his dead-eye goalkicking at least lived up to expectations.

The fullback bookended his troubled 1999 farewell season with 18-point hauls against the Roosters and Knights, and finished the season with 34 goals from 39 attempts (87 percent). Ridge was the first player to retire with more than 500 goals at a strike-rate of above 80 percent.

1. Michael Witt (2007-08) – 121 goals from 139 attempts (87.05%)

Few teams in premiership history have been blessed with a goalkicker in the consistently red-hot form Witt produced for the Warriors during his two-season stay in Auckland.

The former Parramatta and Manly half booted an astounding 62 goals from 67 attempts in 2007 at a then-premiership-record 92.5 percent (Penrith's Michael Gordon set a new mark with 57 from 61 at 93.4 percent two years later).

Remarkably, Witt only took over the goalkicking duties mid-season after Tony Martin broke down with injury, but he landed his first 26 shots at goal for the Warriors in a row. His incredible accuracy was crucial to the Warriors finishing in the top four for just the second (and most recent) time in their history.

Witt regressed from superhuman to mere sharpshooter status in 2008 with 59 goals from 72 attempts at 82 percent. He left the club at the end of the season and had stints with the Otago rugby union side, Super League outfits Celtic Crusaders and London Broncos, and finally St George Illawarra in 2014.

THIS WARRIORS LIFE

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Kiwis Assistant Coaches Confirmed

By NZRL

Nathan Cayless (left) and Ben Gardiner (right).
Photo www.photosport.nz

KIWIS COACH Michael Maguire is calling on top level expertise to round-off his team of staff for the ground-breaking Test in Denver against England on 23 June.

Kiwi #673 Nathan Cayless and former North Sydney Bears Coach, Ben Gardiner both join Maguire in the assistant coach role, two appointments the Head Coach says will add a lot of value to his coaching staff.

“I’ve been hired to do a job – assemble the best possible team of players who want to put their hand up and say, ‘I want to play for New Zealand wherever it might be’. Every single player I’ve spoken to has really shown quite a bit of emotion about wanting to play for that jersey.

“Part of doing that means having the right expertise around me – people that are just as hell-bent on putting pride into that Kiwis jersey as I am. These two are top blokes who I believe will do exactly that,” Maguire said.

Cayless is best known as the Kiwi legend who captained the team to World Cup victory in 2008, and recently took charge of the Junior Kiwis as Head Coach in 2017. He became a household name playing rugby league at the highest level and has also built up an impressive coaching portfolio too.

Cayless took on the Wentworth Magpies ISP NSW team as Head Coach in 2016 after a stint as Head Coach of the Eels SG Ball side, and another as assistant coach of the Blue and Gold Holden Cup side in 2015.

Ben Gardiner has also been re-appointed as another one of Maguire’s assistant coaches bringing a set of skills the Head Coach is looking forward to working with.

As the assistant coach of the New South Wales under-20s, Gardiner was credited with turning around the North Sydney Bears’ fortunes in the NSW Cup after taking the head coach role mid-way through the 2015 season. Gardiner also had a part to play in the South Sydney Rabbitohs’ 2014 Premiership win alongside Maguire.

Donny Singe also returns to the Kiwis staff as High Performance Manager alongside Sean Edwards who comes on board as Athlete Performance Coach. Both Singe and Edwards have played crucial roles in the high performance space when taking their respective clubs, Manly Sea Eagles and South Sydney Rabbitohs, to win NRL Premierships.

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



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Kiwi Ferns Wider Squad Announced

By Brooke Hurdell
NZRL

FOLLOWING A blockbuster final at NZRL's National Women's Tournament, the Kiwi Ferns wider squad has been named ahead of preparations for the Kiwi Ferns, Kiwis and Junior Kiwis triple-header to be held in Auckland on 13 October.

The squad of 33 includes some fresh development prospects, products of the ever-growing women's game, as well as many seasoned veterans carrying years of international experience.

Despite closing the curtain on World Cup rugby league, Laura Mariu has proven she's still performing at the top level admitting the appeal of playing in October's triple-header was too strong.

"After the World Cup I thought I'd hang up the boots on my Kiwi Ferns career but I just can't stay away. While my body still allows me I'm keen to play in that Kiwi Ferns jersey if they'll have me," she said.

She also celebrates her naming on the New Zealand Order of Merit in the Queen's Birthday Honours announced today for her outstanding service to rugby league.

While there will be some additions to the squad as dispensations, injuries and overseas players in contention are considered, Kiwi Ferns Coach Kelvin Wright is excited to begin his journey with the squad that promises some "real raw talent".

"The squad I'll be working with in the lead-up to October's triple-header is exactly what any coach can hope for, full of talent and rugby league smarts.

"With the right support I believe we can create something pretty special as a team," he said.

"It's great to see women from the regions putting

their hand up and excited to work alongside the women to ensure we have the best team on the field in October," he said.

Preparations for the Test against the Jillaroos in October will be further enhanced by the opportunity for players to compete in the new NRL Women's Competition.

New Zealand Rugby League Talent Manager David McMeeken was singing his praises for the level of play demonstrated over the three day tournament.

"In wet, muddy conditions over two of the three days of play there was some exceptional football on display. The players and staff were a credit to all the regions represented and there was a great environment created around the venue from them all, despite the conditions.

"This squad provides Kelvin with plenty of experience and also some youth players who have showcased some unique ability throughout the tournament, who if exposed to a higher level of coaching and surrounded with the experience within the squad, we could potentially see some of those players at the next World Cup," McMeeken said.

Kiwi Ferns wider squad:

AKARANA: Alice Vailea, Crystal Tamaru, Georgia Hale, Karley Te Kawa, Lara Diamond-Brahne, Ngatokotoru Arakua, Shontelle Woodman, Annetta-Claudia Nuuausala, Lisa Edwards; CANTERBURY: Masuisuimatamaalii Tauasa Pauaraisa; COUNTIES: Aiesha-Leigh Smalley, Amber Kani, Apii Nicholls-Pualau, Hilda Peters, Kaylen Ikitule, Kerehitina Matua,

Kimiora Nati, Krystal Rota, Langi Veainu, Laura Mariu, Lavinia Tauhalaiku, Louisa Gago, Onjeurlina Leiataua, Raquel Anderson-Pitman, Teuila Fotu-Moala, Sarah Filimoeatu; AUCKLAND VULCANS: Ma'atuleio Fotu-Moala, Tanika Jazz Noble-Bell; WAI-COA-BAY: Honey Hireme, Kanyon Paul, Lakiila Gudgeon, Te Whetumarama Nuku; WEL-LINGTON: Acacia Te Iwimate.

New Kiwi Ferns Coach Announced

By NZRL

Kelvin Wright, speaks at the New Zealand Rugby League Awards. 10/02/2018. Photo www.photosport.nz

THE NEW Zealand Rugby League is pleased to announce today, Kelvin Wright as the new Head Coach of the Kiwi Ferns ahead of the Queen's Birthday weekend National Women's Tournament taking place 2-4 June.

Since his coaching career began in 2011, Wright has fulfilled several coaching roles at New Zealand level including as Junior Kiwis Head Coach, Junior Warriors Head Coach, Warriors Assistant Coach and Kiwis Assistant Coach, roles which will prove beneficial when he begins his journey with the national women's rugby league team.

Wright will lead the selection panel identifying the top 30 female players in New Zealand during this weekend's National Women's Tournament. These players will contribute to the make-up of the Kiwi Ferns wider squad to be announced on Monday 4 June at the conclusion of the final where the national women's champion team will be crowned.

NZRL Coaching Manager, Gary Peacham said he was "excited to see a coach of Kelvin's ability put his hand up for the top job and is confident he can successfully lead the Kiwi Ferns programme."

While Kelvin boasts a wealth of rugby league experience, he was particularly excited to accept this new challenge – to coach the three-time World Champion Kiwi Ferns team. With the supreme level of talent available in New Zealand, Wright is welcoming of the new era women's rugby league is about to enter into and believes he can offer significant value to the team.

"I'll bring fresh ideas and experience which I've

gained through a number of different campaigns. On a technical level, I'll be challenging the players to improve in all areas to take our game to the next level. We are very lucky to have a tremendous amount of Kiwi talent across New Zealand and Australia who will be competing for spots in the squad," Wright said.

As a part of the trans-Tasman triple-header taking place in Auckland on October 13, the Kiwi Ferns will go head-to-head with the Jillaroos ahead of the Kiwis v Kangaroos clash, in their first match since the 2017 Rugby League World Cup final in Brisbane.

For Kelvin, the road to the October match-up starts this weekend when six teams including last year's champions, the Counties Manukau Stingrays, Akarana Falcons, Wai-Coa-Bay Stallions, Canterbury, Wellington Orcas and the Auckland Vulcans teams descend upon Cornwall Park.

"I'm sure we'll see quality games played at a tremendous pace. I'll be looking for speed, skill and players who compete on every play with a strong desire to win," Wright said.

Following the tournament, Wright will support the NZRL in appointing the remainder of the Kiwi Ferns management team.



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Auckland Lafu Feagaiga scores a try during a match against Tonga. Photo www.photosport.nz

Classy Auckland Beat Tonga NZ Residents

By ARL

AUCKLAND WON the inaugural Upright Access Mann Cup on Saturday, running riot to beat the Tonga New Zealand Residents 40-12.

Down 12-10 at the break, Auckland blew their opponents off the park with five unanswered tries in the second stanza, with co-captains Jordan Tuarae and Jethro Friend the key figures in the comeback.

The match was just the third time the Auckland premier side has taken the field since 2009, and was their first win in that period as well.

Playing in front of a crowd of over 1,200 at Mount Smart Stadium, the Tongan side flew out of the gates, scoring via Sione Tongia and captain Daniel Palavi to lead by 12 after as many minutes.

But the Auckland reply was swift, and helped by the introduction of Abraham Papali'i off the bench, they scored twice via Tuarae, who grubbered for himself before barging over from close range, to trail by just two after halfback Howard Brown added a conversion.

The Tongan New Zealand Residents couldn't come close to matching Auckland in the second 40, with the hosts taking the lead three minutes after the break thanks to a try to former Junior Warrior Lafu Feagaiga.

The sin-binning of Tonga's Saimone Makahili for repeated infringements marked the opening of the flood-gates, with Auckland scoring via Cole Waaka and Corey Seator in the 10 minutes which followed, before Feagaiga grabbed his second and Papali'i scored a rampaging effort from 30 metres out.

Glenora Bears speedster Simon Luafalealo finished the scoring at an even 40 with five minutes left on the clock.

Auckland coach Grant Pocklington said despite his side's sluggish opening few minutes, confidence had remained high.

"We knew Tonga had enjoyed all the ball early on. We had one set in the first 12 minutes. In the first half we had just six sets. So all we needed was possession," Pocklington said.

"Tonga were always going to come out pretty hard. They had a lot of passion and pride. But to go 12-0 down and get ourselves back into the game was pleasing."

Auckland 40 (Jordan Tuarae x2, Lafu Feagaiga x2, Cole Waaka, Corey Seator, Abraham Papali'i, Simon Luafalealo tries; Howard Brown 4 goals) def. Tonga NZ Residents 12 (Sione Tongia, Daniel Palavi tries; Willie Stowers 2 goals). At Mt Smart Stadium.



THIS WEEK IN OUR ROUND 14 ISSUE

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



Usually NRL players grab all the headlines, but Wayne Bennett and Craig Bellamy are two of the biggest stars in our game. Among the greatest coaches to have contributed to rugby league, both men have made their names out of building the careers of players - either from teenagers to NRL stars, or bringing the best out of them when they appear past their prime. We speak to Rabbitohs coach Anthony Seibold and Alex McKinnon about the influence the men have had on their life and career.

Petero Civoniceva has felt the pain of backing up for a club game after playing State of Origin a few days before. He says most players do so with pride, but the earlier in the week the better for those who will back up from Origin in Round 14.

Roosters half Luke Keary had several missed calls from New South Wales coach Brad Fittler on the eve of the Blues team being announced last week, but Keary still hasn't called him back. The 26-year-old said he knew 'Freddy' was calling to tell him he didn't make the squad, but all he's concerned about is playing good footy for the Roosters.

PLUS... This Week in History, the heart and soul of the Bulldogs, 10 minutes with Jake Granville, the Knights still have their sights set on the top eight, and a Warriors poster.

ROUND 14, 2018

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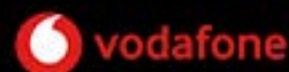
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