

VODAFONE



Sir Peter Leitch Club

AT MT SMART STADIUM, HOME OF THE MIGHTY VODAFONE WARRIORS

Newsletter

11th July 2018

#225

Don't panic, Nothing Has Changed

By David Kemeys

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



LAST WEEK we might have endured the horror of losing to a forward pass but I commented that even in the loss I remained positive because of how good we were in the second half, defending like men possessed.

We hung in the arm wrestle and stayed alive when we had no right to.

A week later I am remaining positive because captain Roger Tuivasa-Sheck says he is.

RTS came out after the woeful loss to the Panthers and said the Warriors would not go into their shells and would continue to fight through the rest of the NRL campaign.

Instead of moaning and complaining Tuivasa-Sheck said he relished the chance to prove our boys are worthy of a place in the finals.

We are still only a win out of the top four. What is a cause for concern is the embarrassing nature of the 36-4 defeat to the Panthers, a side playing without their State of Origin stars.

Think back to our trip to Townsville, where not many thought we would win.

Those two points were a major bonus as we headed into a period most of us realised was going to be extremely tough.

The Sharks will leave a bitter taste for a long, long time, because those points would have had us travelling well ahead of anything we could have hoped for.

Moaning won't change the fact we got ripped off, and the Panthers is a setback, not the loss, more the manner of it.

Now we must confront the Broncos in Brisbane and then the Storm at home.

Points would be a major boost but I cannot realistically see us getting them, as I have said all along.

After that along come the Titans, who are good on their day but have fewer of them than we do, and the Dragons (both away).

Nothing has changed. We are still looking at doing the business against the struggling Knights at Mt Smart, before a trip to Sydney for the Bulldogs, and the final two weeks when the Panthers and Raiders are both in Auckland.

RTS says he still has confidence in the team.

Continued on next page...

“We need to go back and focus on the next part of the competition because these are the business rounds. This is where it's gets tough, everyone is fighting for those final spots in the top eight and those are the games we want to be in. We're going to learn from this game and come back and be better in Brisbane.”

We will need to be but we have showed more than once this year we can bounce back from adversity.

Kearney Blindsided

This quote says it all.

“It was a tough one tonight. It came out of nowhere,” coach Stephen Kearney said.

Now the poor bugger is getting to watch all the critics – and there are still many – loving it.

It's understandable though. Three times in the past four years we have looked finals-bound but failed.

“People have been waiting for us to collapse all year,” Kearney said. “What everyone says outside our group, we're not fussed. We know we weren't good. We know what we've got to improve.”

There's nothing to disagree with there.

Rookies Shine

Credit where it is due, Panthers rookie Jarome Luai was amazing.

He was on fire in the Panthers' 36-4 win, and clearly hadn't heard the halves pairing he was half of was meant to be suspect.

What is incredible is that in only his second NRL game he scored two tries, set up a second and had a hand in two more. He also nailed six of eight goals – though one he missed was beyond terrible - for a personal 20-point haul.

Give It A rest

Talk about you can't please everyone. Driving home on Monday night to the news the Warriors have signed Leeson Ah Mau, and you'd think that was good news.

Oh no.

There's plenty of commentary about how we should never have let him go, how he is not much, how he is over-rated and the sky is generally falling.

Bugger off. The 28-year-old had to go to get experience he was never going to get staying at Mt Smart, and he is a big upgrade on what we have.

The Dragon's front rower has signed a three-year contract and returns at the start of next season.

He made his NRL debut for us back in 2009 so has racked up a few miles in that time, and was good enough to make his Kiwis debut in Denver.

For the doubters, he has made 169 NRL appearances, 134 for the Dragons and 33 for North Queensland, to go with his two for us. He has also played 16 tests for Samoa.

He's big and he's ugly, and that'll do me, especially after looking at him being one of the Dragons best and most consistent in recent times.

I'd Love To Hear That Explanation

Good on the Warriors, who went to Aussie last week and asked for some answers about the refereeing decisions of late.

It's not just the forward pass, there were endless baffling calls against us, though it probably came as no surprise we were on the wrong end of a lop-sided penalty count - because we always are.

Warriors CEO Cameron George contacted NRL head of football Brian Canavan and coach Stephen Kearney also spoke with ref bosses.

Apparently they got an undertaking that officials would look at the incidents.

Right, so nothing going to happen then

But I did very much like George's argument, which was that the fans were so pissed off the club could not just lie down and take it. Good on him.

You're fairly new to it Cameron, we've been putting up with it week after week for ooh, 25 years.

Guess what though. No reply as yet.

How Is That Tackle Legal?

I'll just climb back on my that's bullshit ref wagon again.

Where the hell all those first half penalties came from is anyone's guess.

But the one that really slacked me off was when try-scoring sensation David Fusita'a headed for the corner early in the second half yet was denied by the last ditch effort of Waqa Blake.

He was lauded in the Aussie papers, but I cannot see that he made anything other than a blatant shoulder charge.

To be fair to him, of course you would, it's an all or nothing play, but that doesn't make it legal.

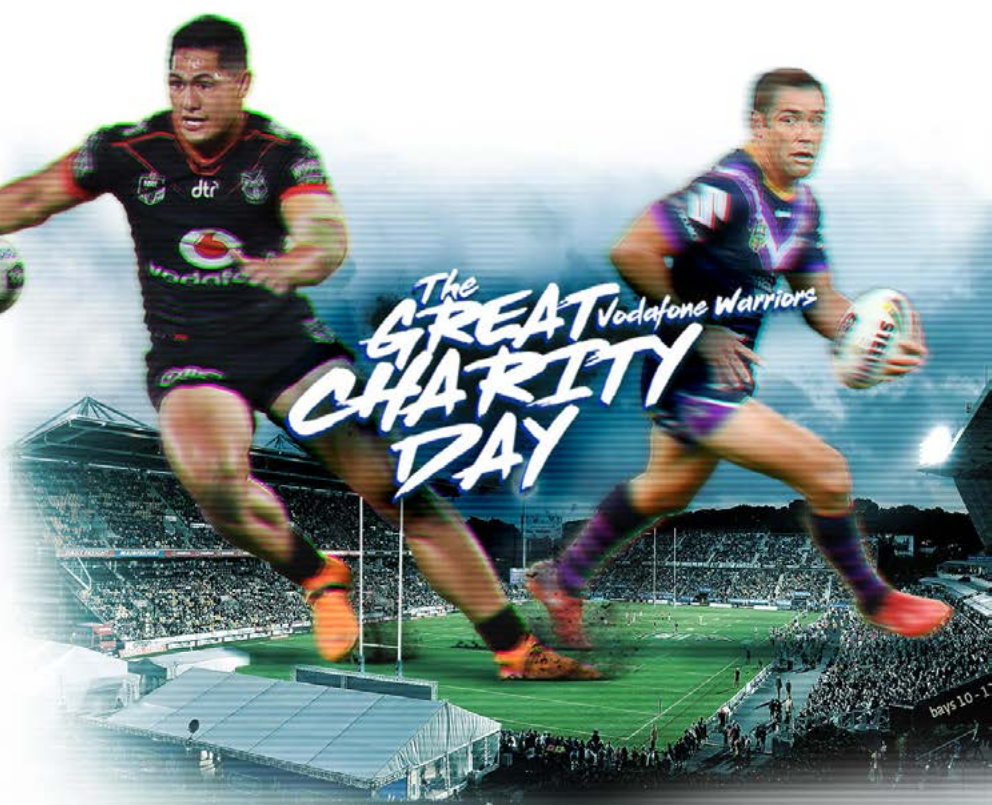
Score that try and who knows what happens.



V



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Three changes for away clash against Broncos

by Richard Becht

GERARD BEALE starts on the left wing while Joe Vuna and Anthony Gelling have been brought onto the bench in three changes for the Vodafone Warriors' 18th-round clash against the Brisbane Broncos at Suncorp Stadium on Sunday (2.00pm kick-off local time; 4.00pm NZT).

Beale, used on the bench in last Friday night's loss to Penrith, replaces regular left wing Ken Maumalo, who is ruled out with a knee injury he picked up against the Panthers which is still being assessed.

It will be Beale's third start on the wing in the last month while 20-year-old Vuna, who made his NRL debut against Melbourne on Anzac Day, is named among the four bench players in line to be used on Sunday. Gelling, a try scorer in the tough 15-18 loss to Cronulla on June 29, fills Beale's spot.

The other four players on the extended bench are prop Ligi Sao, hooker Karl Lawton, centre Blake Ayshford and halfback Mason Lino.

Issac Luke, Hiku and James Gavet edge closer to personal milestones.

Luke will move within three games of his 250th career appearance, Hiku within three of his 100th and Gavet will be just one short of his 50th. Simon Mannering remains on track to bring up his landmark 300th appearance in the final match of the regular season.

The Broncos and the Vodafone Warriors have identical 10-6 win-loss records after 17 rounds. They're among four teams on 22 points with seventh-placed Brisbane (-6) just ahead of the Vodafone Warriors (-10) on points for and against differential.

The Sydney Roosters and Cronulla are also on 22 points with Melbourne (third) and Penrith (fourth) just two points ahead and South Sydney (first) and St

George Illawarra (second) two points further away on 26. Canberra (ninth) and Wests Tigers (10th) are six points back on 16.

In 40 matches between the two clubs, the Vodafone Warriors have had 17 wins and the Broncos 23 but in matches in Brisbane the home side has a 14-5 advantage. The last 10 encounters have been split 5-5 with the Vodafone Warriors' last win in Brisbane being their 56-18 success in 2013.

VODAFONE WARRIORS v BRISBANE BRONCOS

2.00pm, Sunday, July 15, 2018

Suncorp Stadium, Brisbane

Vodafone Warriors

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





By Barry Ross

COURAGE

Fiji's Tariq Sims scores a try. During a 2013 Rugby League World Cup match against Ireland. Photo www.photosport.nz

CONGRATULATIONS TO NSW backrow forward, Tariq Sims, who will make his State of Origin debut this week in the third game of this season's series. It has been a tough path for 28 year old Sims, who has suffered some major injuries since making his first grade debut against the Newcastle Knights in Townsville on 19 March 2011. In that first season, he broke both the tibia and fibula in his left leg while playing for the Cowboys in the 28-20 win over the Sharks at Townsville on 27 August. He was out of football for the remainder of that season but returned at the beginning of 2012. Just seven games into that season, he suffered similar injuries to the same leg, during the tight 30-28 win over the Panthers at Townsville on 19 May. Again he was on the sidelines for an extended period but bounced back. He moved to the Knights for the 2015 season but in a mid season switch in 2016, he joined St. George/Illawarra. Now in his third season with the Dragons, Sims has been outstanding so far in 2018. In his 15 club games this year, he has made 49 tackle breaks, ran for 668 post contact metres, made 330 tackles, averaged 115 running metres a game and scored five tries. With the Cowboys, Knights and Dragons, he has now played 145 first grade games and scored 30 tries. He has also played five Tests for Fiji and six matches for NSW Country Origin.

Born in the southern NSW coastal town of Gerringong, about 130 kms south of Sydney, Tariq is part of a talented Rugby League playing family. His sister, Ruan, 36, has represented Australia at both Rugby League and Rugby Union, while older brother, Ashton, 33, played 228 first grade matches with the Dragons, the Broncos and the Knights and then 90 games with English club, Warrington. Ashton is now with the Toronto Wolfpack club. Younger brother Korbin, 26, has played 110 first grade games with the Knights and Broncos. Korbin suffered a broken jaw earlier this year in the clash with the Roosters and has just resumed playing. All three brothers have represented Fiji because of their Fijian mother. Ashton has played 12 Tests, Korbin seven and Tariq six.

Although now living in Toronto Canada, while playing with the Wolfpack, Ashton intends to be up at 5am to watch the stream of the Origin game from Brisbane. In a Sydney Sunday newspaper article, he said he extremely pleased and proud of his brother. "In his early days there was some pretty tough times and there were a lot of tears," he said.

Ashton is happy playing with the Wolfpack. Just last Saturday at Toronto's Lamport Stadium, he played well in the team's 68-4 thrashing of the Sheffield Eagles. That victory gave the Wolfpack the League Championship for 2018. With just three games to play, the Wolfpack led the ladder by seven competition points. The club began playing Rugby League last season and won the tier three competition in their first season. This led to promotion for this English season and now they have won the second tier, Betfred League Championship Leaders Shield. After the remaining three competition games are played, the top four teams from the tier 2 competition, will take on the four bottom sides from Super League to decide the makeup of the 2019 Super League competition. The Wolfpack has a realistic chance of moving up and if they do, the English Super League will include teams from England, from France (Toulouse Olympique) and from Canada (the Wolfpack).

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There are 12 teams in the 2018 tier 2 English competition and in their 20 matches so far this season, the Wolfpack have won 18, drew one and lost one. The loss was to the London Broncos in England on 25 February but they reversed this result at Toronto on 9 June when they defeated the Broncos 32-12 before a home crowd of 7,384. In their 20 games this year, they have totalled 738 points to 316 against for a match average of 37-16.

A lot of credit for the Wolfpack's success must go to the club's Director of Rugby, Brian Noble. Now 57, Brian has a remarkable record in our game. He played over 400 matches with Bradford Northern and Wakefield and also had a season with the Cronulla Sharks in 1985. Not a big man, he was a tough, hard working hooker and he represented Great Britain in 11 Tests, as well as captaining the Lions on the 1984 tour to Australia, New Zealand and Papua/New Guinea. After retiring, he worked in the Bradford Northern back room and took over as Head Coach in 2001. With Bradford Northern he took the team to three Super League Grand Final wins, a Challenge Cup victory in 2003 and three World Club Championships. These World Club Championships were in 2002 (beat Newcastle 41-26), 2004 (beat Penrith 22-4) and 2006 (beat Wests Tigers 30-10). After Bradford, Brian coached Wigan, then the North Wales Crusaders followed by Salford. Coaching over 300 English club matches, he finished with a success rate

of 63. He also coached Great Britain in 14 Tests from 2004 to 2006.

There is not much that can be said about the Warriors match with the Panthers at Penrith on Friday night. They were well beaten by a more determined and enthusiastic team. Six tries by the home team to one five minutes from the end, illustrates the Panthers domination. Only 43 percent of possession and 62 missed tackles certainly did not help the Warriors cause. After such a defeat is not the time to complain, but I have got to say the forward pass situation was again noticeable in the first half. Referee, Ben Cummins, was quick to judge two Warrior passes as forward, which to me seemed fifty fifty. But just before halftime, after a long break by Penrith forward, Jack Hetherington, he popped a pass to a team-mate, which was clearly forward, but missed by both Cummins and his touch judges. The TV commentators were quick to mention it. But I must add that the miss by the officials had no bearing on the result, as Penrith were just too good on the night. Everyone knows that the Warriors next two games with the Broncos in Brisbane and then the Storm at Mt. Smart will be tough, but they are difficult opponents for all clubs. The Warriors still have four games to play at home from their last eight, including the final two, against the Panthers on Friday 24 August and the Raiders on Friday 31 August.

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The GREAT Vodafone Warriors CHARITY DAY





By John Coffey



Jarome Luai looks to pass. Warriors v Panthers.
Photo www.photosport.nz

Seeing Into The Future

EVERY SO often a gifted youngster makes us sit up and take notice. There was the legendary Dennis Williams at Castleford in 1971, scoring a dazzling try the first time he handled the ball in a Test match only a day after his eighteenth birthday. It was an act which turned the game and propelled the Kiwis towards their first series victory on British soil for 64 years and ultimately to a unique Grand Slam over all major nations.

In 1995 Stacey Jones simultaneously hit the big time and the headlines. By 2003 a teenaged Benji Marshall was sidestepping in mid-air and flicking passes from improbable positions. A year later Sonny Bill Williams burst into first grade in the Bulldogs centres and scattered the Parramatta defence in all directions. But we knew they were coming because they had been brilliant juniors and were tipped to become great Kiwis.

I wasn't expecting anything like the emergence of another potential champion at Penrith on Friday night. Admittedly I was uneasy pre-match -- as I tend to be when everyone on both sides of the Tasman picks the Warriors to beat a supposedly weakened opponent. But it was a thousand to one that I would this week be writing 800 words about Jarome Luai, who was starting his first match in the Panthers' number seven jersey.

The name was only vaguely familiar. He captained the Junior Kiwis and played for Samoa in the World Cup last year, though not in the first-round 38-8 loss to the Kiwis. Ben Roberts, a journeyman who had fallen out of the NRL and was playing with English club Castleford, was preferred ahead of Luai. If anything I was primed to take more notice of halfback partner Tyrone May, who was returning from serious injury.

Not for long, though. Luai tried a grubber kick to the Warriors' in-goal and got it fractionally wrong. Undaunted, he tried again, and this time presented left wing Tyrone Phillips with the opening try. Full marks for having the confidence in oneself, young man. Oh, so you're the goalkicker too, eh? Not long afterwards Penrith, and Luai, are back. This time he uses his speed and side-step to wrong-foot Chris Satae and score himself.

At halftime I hit the media guide and discover more about Luai. Aged 21, he was a St Mary's junior and thus a product of the excellent Panthers nursery. He was born in Sydney of New Zealand and Samoan parents so is not, as Stephen McIvor commented, another one that got away. Presuming his Junior Kiwis captaincy is an indication he has opted for the Kiwis over Australian allegiance, he is actually one the NZRL has reeled in.

Luai's only previous first grade experience was 20 minutes off the bench against Newcastle in round 10. Yet he has become the main man among a plethora of New Zealand and Pacific islands internationals in a clash to decide which club finishes round 17 in the premiership top four. His second try is sensational as he weaves between grasping Warriors and ensures Satae has plenty of mates to compare notes about Luai's elusiveness.

When fulltime brings relief to Warriors fans that there is to be no more, Luai has 20 of his team's 36 points. He had the benefit of a rampant Panthers pack led by Kiwi James Fisher-Harris but it is clear the Junior Kiwis half has totally out-shone regular senior Kiwis Test half Shaun Johnson.

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Luai, with his two tries and a hand in two others, plus six goals, has done everything Warriors supporters wanted from Johnson.

Luai had every reason to approach this game with trepidation. Standing in for Nathan Cleary was daunting enough in a side which had lost its last two games to lesser rivals. But he was also up against Johnson in another of those nervous “playing against boyhood idol” moments. Penrith coach Anthony Griffin patted his own back by attributing those minutes he gave Luai at Newcastle for making Friday’s performance possible.

Legendary Australian halfback and Channel Nine commentator Peter Sterling likened Luai’s breakout display to that of 1991 Rothmans Medal winner Ewen McGrady for the Canterbury Bulldogs. For New Zealand’s sake, let’s hope Luai does not follow McGrady’s walkabout tendencies. Equally excited Fox Sports commentators compared Luai’s second try with that of Stacey Jones in the 2002 Grand Final. High praise indeed.

Afterwards, Griffin pondered he could now afford to rest Cleary from Friday’s clash with Cronulla, scheduled for 48 hours after Origin III. Luai deserves another chance to prove this was not a flash in the pan, although the Sharks are a merciless lot and will study video of his every move this week. Cleary, who is 10 months younger than Luai, will then be back and the sensational stand-in’s footy future becomes clouded.

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



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ONLY 4 HOME GAMES LEFT

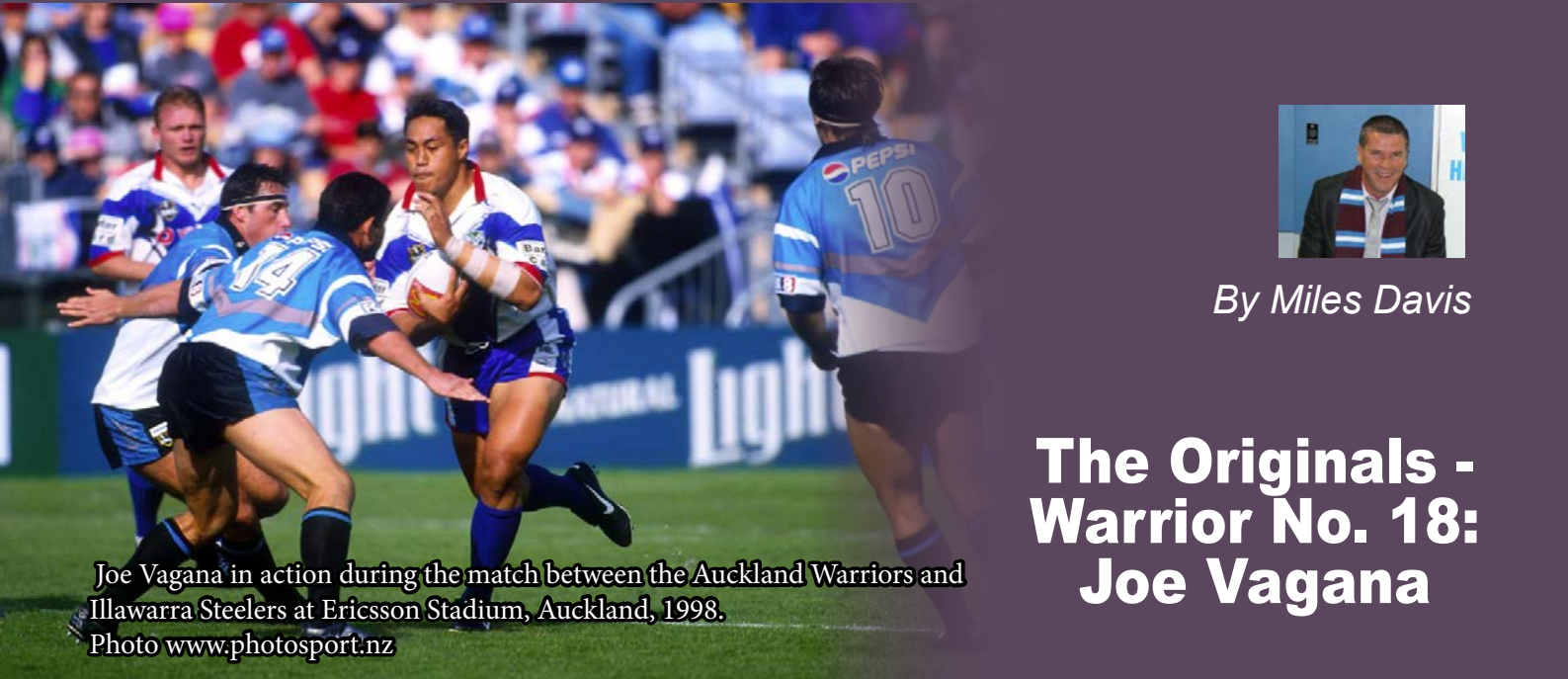
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AUGUST 24

CANBERRA RAIDERS
AUGUST 31



By Miles Davis

The Originals - Warrior No. 18: Joe Vagana

Joe Vagana in action during the match between the Auckland Warriors and Illawarra Steelers at Ericsson Stadium, Auckland, 1998.

Photo www.photosport.nz

ORIGINAL WARRIOR No. 18 was to become a fan favourite both at Mt Smart and in England. Auckland-born Joe Vagana went to school at St Paul's, renowned for producing top rugby league talent. His first club was Auckland's Richmond Rovers based in Grey Lynn and his idol was Kiwi legend Mark Graham. In 1993 as an 18 year old he was selected to represent his home province.

In 1994 he was signed by the North Harbour Sea Eagles to play in the Lion Red Cup. After finishing 3rd in the round-robin, his side made it through to the Grand Final where he played in the 2nd row (as opposed to his favoured prop position) as they defeated Counties Manukau heroes 24-16.

He was beginning to catch the eye of the rugby league fraternity and it was no surprise when he was signed by the Auckland Warriors for their inaugural season. Although he was omitted from the line-up in Round 1 against Brisbane he made it onto the interchange bench for Round 2 against the Illawarra Steelers. He made the bench again for the Round 3 victory against the Western Suburbs Magpies. It was a bitter-sweet victory as the Warriors had the points deducted for an interchange violation which resulted in them missing out on the play-offs at the end of the season. It was a mistake made by the coaching staff but it was poor Joe that was the player involved. Apparently his mates still give him stick about it till this day. What else are friends for?

In all he was to make 8 appearances in that first season but made 20 appearances in the 1996 season, scoring his first try in the Round 2 loss to the Magpies. In 1995 he had been called up to the Samoan side, playing 2 games, but in 1996 he made the Kiwis playing in all 3 tests against the touring Great Britain side. In all he played 27 tests for the Kiwis.

In 2000 Eric Watson bought the Vodafone Warriors but did not buy the players contracts. The outcome was Vagana moving on to pastures green after 115 games and 9 tries for the Warriors.

His destination was the north of England and the Bradford Bulls where he had immediate success, the Bulls making it to the Super League Grand Final and defeating Wigan Warriors 37-6 at Old Trafford. 2002 brought further glory for Big Joe with a 41-26 World Club Challenge win over the Newcastle Knights and a narrow 19-18 loss to St Helens in the Super League Grand Final.

It was a golden era for the Bulls in the 7 years Vagana was with them. 3 Super League Grand Final wins, 3 World Club Challenge wins and a Challenge Cup Final win in 2003, a 22-20 win over bitter rivals Leeds Rhinos in front of a 71,000 crowd at Cardiff's Millennium Stadium. Vagana rates this as one of the highlights of his stellar career at Bradford.

He retired at the end of the 2008 season after 240 games and 19 tries for Bradford and decided to head home to New Zealand and set up home after 8 years in Yorkshire (apparently his kids all had Yorkshire accents). He was given a conversion attempt in his last game for the Bulls (link to video of his effort is below).

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He was much-loved by the Bradford faithful, being named in their team of the Century and getting the following accolade from his coach Steve McNamara "Joe has probably been up there with Robbie Paul as the most significant overseas signing the club has ever made. His presence is simply immense and there will be a whole host of players who will be glad to see the back of Joe Vagana, so they don't have to play against him".

After becoming involved in civil contracting and machinery hire, Vagana founded Trow group with fellow Aucklander Saia Latu. As well as managing multi-million dollar contracts in Auckland and the Waikato, Trow also works to salvage and recycle materials from their building sites to be used in schools, community centres and churches in New Zealand and the Pacific. They also operate an inclusive hiring policy, working with Tainui to train locals for long-term employment.

So the former Vodafone Warrior with an ability to destroy opponents is now spending his time trying to build a career for others.

Joe Vagana leaving ceremony Bradford Bulls <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rCHfVDKoAb0>

Joe Vagana conversion attempt <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0AIVgicFErA>

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Coming to the Vodafone Warriors V Melbourne Storm game next Sunday? Then here are the details...

Gates open 11-30am

11-45am Jersey Flegg Vodafone Warriors V Sydney rosters

1-45pm ISP Vodafone Warriors V Wyong Roos

4-05pm Vodafone Warriors V Melbourne Storm

Tour Info

If you want to do a tour of Mt Smart Stadium go to the back of the Western stand and go to the Southern end. On the right hand side there is a lift. Tell security that you doing the tour of the Stadium and then take the lift to the Stacey Jones lounge and ask for Sir Peter. The tour will kick off at 2-30pm all welcome!





SCHOOL HOLIDAYS MERCHANDISE FESTIVAL

AT SYLVIA PARK

WEDNESDAY 11TH - TUESDAY 17TH JULY

This Warriors Life Top 10: Warriors' Best One-Week Turnarounds

By Will Evans

WARRIORS FANS are reeling after Friday night's grim 36-4 loss at Panthers Stadium. But a week is an eternity in rugby league and Stephen Kearney's humbled squad shape as a dangerous opponent for the Broncos this Sunday.

This week we take a look at the Warriors' best zero-to-hero efforts.

THISWARRIORS.COM TOP 10 – WARRIORS' BEST ONE-WEEK TURNAROUNDS

10. 2018 v Tigers

A feature of the Warriors' watershed 2018 campaign to date has been their ability to hit straight back after a loss, managing to avoid back-to-back defeats until Round 17.

Stephen Kearney's rejuvenated side put their heaviest defeat of the season – a 50-10 hiding at the hands of Melbourne on Anzac Day – in the rearview-mirror with an authoritative 26-4 win over in-form Wests Tigers in Auckland.

Shaun Johnson had a field day down the Tigers' left edge before replacement dummy-half Karl Lawton sealed the result with a late double off the bench.

9. 2016 v Broncos

The Warriors' ordinary record at alternate New Zealand venues bit them hard once again when they hosted Canberra at New Plymouth's Yarrow Stadium. Coach Andrew McFadden questioned his charges' commitment after a dismal 38-12 defeat, the contest virtually over by halftime as the Green Machine raced to a 22-0 lead.

But a rejigged line-up atoned in their next hit-out, kicking off a trademark mid-season charge with a thumping 36-18 win over third-placed Brisbane at Mount Smart Stadium. Fullback Tui Lolohea claimed man-of-the-match honours, Solomone Kata scored a barnstorming 50-metre try and David Fusitu'a notched a sizzling double as the Warriors' youth brigade came to the fore.

8. 2014 v Bulldogs

The axe came down on Warriors coach Matt Elliott after an insipid 37-6 loss to the Sharks, who went on to finish with the wooden spoon, just five rounds in the 2014 season.

Assistant coach Andrew McFadden stepped into the hot-seat and his team came agonisingly close to marking the start of his tenure with a stirring win. The Warriors led eventual grand finalists Canterbury with five minutes to go at Eden Park but a controversial penalty and a late Trent Hodkinson field goal sunk the hosts 21-20.

While it wasn't a win, the quality of the performance changed the momentum of the Warriors' season. They won 10 of their last 17 games before falling just short of reaching the finals.

7. 2008 v Panthers

The Warriors' late bid for a top-eight finish was rocked by a 34-6 belting from the Dragons in Round 24. That left the Auckland-based club needing to win its remaining two games and hope other results fell its way to qualify for the finals.

The Warriors completed one part of the equation a week later with a superb 42-20 bounce-back victory over Penrith at home. They stormed to a 30-4 halftime lead against a Panthers side that was still in playoffs contention heading into the match. Manu Vatuvei bagged a double and Michael Witt booted seven from seven.

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A big win over Parramatta in the last round and Brisbane's defeat of Newcastle saw the Warriors nab eighth spot.

6. 2000 v Eagles

The club suffered its heaviest loss of Auckland Warriors era courtesy of the St George Illawarra Dragons, humiliated 54-0 at WIN Stadium. Amos Roberts set a new premiership record for points on first-grade debut with 22 from a try and nine goals.

It capped a horror fortnight for the Mark Graham-coached side at the hands of joint venture opponents, having been pumped 30-4 at home by Wests Tigers in the previous round. But the Warriors showed some elusive resolve to overcome another merged entity.

After Ali Lauiti'iti was controversially sent off for a high tackle on the stroke of halftime (he was later exonerated), the 12-man Warriors courageously held on for an 18-14 win over Northern Eagles at Brookvale Oval.

5. 2004 v Raiders

Finalists from 2001-03 under Daniel Anderson, the Warriors' harrowing decline in 2004 reached its nadir when the coach quit in the wake of a 58-6 beatdown from Sydney Roosters – the second-worst defeat in the club's history to that time.

Tony Kemp stepped into the breach and four days later the embattled side pulled off a gutsy 20-14 win over visiting Canberra. The Warriors trailed 14-6 in the second half but tries to Francis Meli, Lance Hohaia and Richard Villasanti spurred them to an unlikely triumph.

But that backs-to-the-wall spirit can only last so long and caretaker Kemp's charges only won two of their remaining 12 games to finish second-last.

4. 2014 v Titans

The Warriors performed a 76-point turnaround late in the 2014 season to keep their top-eight hopes afloat. Torn apart 46-12 by defending champs Sydney Roosters in front of their biggest home crowd of the season, the Warriors returned to Mount Smart seven days later and whipped Gold Coast 42-0.

Fullback Sam Tomkins crossed for two tries while Shaun Johnson racked up 18 points from a try and a seven-from-seven effort off the tee. But after leading 30-0 at halftime the Warriors' scoring rate decelerated – which proved critical as they missed out on the finals by an agonising 13 for-and-against points a week later.

3. 2016 v Dragons

The fallout from the Warriors' 42-0 Anzac Day thrashing in Melbourne intensified in the wake of an ill-advised night out back in Auckland. Manu Vatuvei, Ben Matulino, Bodene Thompson, Sam Lisone and Albert Vete admitted mixing prescription medication with energy drinks and were suspended for one match.

Consequently, the patched-up Warriors went into the following round's clash with bogey side St George Illawarra as rank outsiders. But with Toafofoa Siple on debut, John Palavi recalled for his first NRL game in two years, and Shaun Lane and Sione Lousi making their only top-grade appearances of the season, the Warriors stunned the Dragons 26-10 at Mount Smart.

David Fusitu'a, playing at fullback for the first time at NRL level, was a resounding man of the match, while halfback Shaun Johnson also starred in one of the gutsiest wins in the club's history.

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2. 1995 v Bulldogs

The Auckland Warriors had dreams of debut-season finals grandeur after piecing together a six-match winning streak during a marshmallow-soft section of the draw. But the fledgling club received a brutal reality check in Round 19 courtesy of a Gorden Tallis-led 47-14 drubbing meted out by St George in front of a shell-shocked 28,973-strong Ericsson Stadium turnout.

The Warriors responded superbly, however, producing their best performance of '95 to blast the Bulldogs away 29-8 at Parramatta Stadium. The 19-year-old Stacey Jones was the star of the show but the enduring memory is of a rampaging Willie Poching, who came off the bench in one of only two top-grade appearances for the club to score a try and set up another for Phil Blake.

Auckland lost its last two regular-season games to miss the playoffs on points differential; the Bulldogs won their next six in a row – culminating in a grand final triumph over Manly.

1. 2013 v Knights

The Warriors suffered their worst-ever defeat at Penrith in Round 10 of 2013, crashing 62-6 at the hands of the Panthers. It was Warriors coach Matt Elliott's first visit to the ground since he was dumped by Penrith midway through 2011, while the Warriors' torment was exacerbated by five-eighth cast-off Isaac John scoring a hat-trick and former Mount Smart favourite Lewis Brown bagging a double for the Ivan Cleary-coached Panthers.

The 2-8 Warriors were at rock bottom but they staged a remarkable revival the following weekend with a 28-12 home victory over a Newcastle side that went on to reach the preliminary finals. The Knights led 12-10 at halftime but blinders from back-rowers Feleti Mateo and Elijah Taylor inspired the Warriors to a morale-boosting win.

The result kick-started a giant-killing mid-season run of seven wins in eight games that included the scalps of eventual grand finalists Manly and Sydney Roosters, and defending premiers Melbourne.

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Gary Endacott At The Forefront Of Pdrl's Rise

By Will Evans

GARY ENDACOTT boasts a sporting CV most could only dream of, but despite turning 50 last month the inspirational Cantabrian is still ticking off major milestones and highlights even he thought would never come along.

Born with cerebral palsy, Endacott has made an art form of trampling the odds. He has run four New York City Marathons, won world titles in disabled tennis and became the first person with a significant disability to climb Mount Kilimanjaro, the highest mountain in Africa.

But there's only one sport that truly holds his heart: rugby league. And 2018 has been a watershed year for Endacott in the 13-a-side game.

After representing New Zealand in the historic Physical Disability Rugby League Commonwealth Championships in Queensland in February, Endacott captained a team in a PDRL curtain-raiser to the Warriors' NRL clash with Cronulla last Friday.

Nineteen years since father Frank, who spent four years as a reserve grade and first grade coach at the Auckland Warriors, last coached the Kiwis in a Test at Mount Smart Stadium and brother Shane played his final premiership match for the Warriors there, Gary finally graced the same turf.

"I've done a couple of things in my time but that was pretty special," said Endacott, who was made a Companion of the New Zealand Order of Merit in the 2016 New Year's honours for services to people with disabilities.

"I've certainly walked across the pitch a few times when dad was coaching, but I never thought (playing on Mount Smart) would become a reality and to go out and captain one of the teams was also very nice.

"I thought it was a good show we put on really."

The match was organised by PDRLNZ in conjunction with the Warriors, and Endacott praised the club's efforts in making it a rousing success.

"The whole Warriors management and everyone looking after us really treated us like they wanted us there – it wasn't about just doing the right thing, they were pleased to have us as part of their program," he said.

"That in some ways was a bit of a highlight in itself."

For Frank Endacott, it was just another example of his son's remarkable tenacity and thirst for a challenge – as well as a chance to show off his trademark cheeky wit.

Continued on next page...

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“It was fantastic. I see he made the quip in the interview after the game that ‘my father’s been here, my brother’s been here, but I reminded them I’m the one that’s still out here,’” Endacott senior laughed.

“Good on him, it’s a great moment for him. I believe if it wasn’t for his disability he could have been a great player, he’s got that much heart and he knows the game inside out.

“Just to get out there and doing what he’s doing, representing his country against Australia, he’s done great and we’re very proud of him.

“He just loves it. He’s married with a couple of kids but he still finds time to play footy.”

As momentous as his array of achievements are, Gary Endacott said nothing he has achieved can compare to the feeling of representing his country in rugby league and playing the game he adores.

“I thought it was done well, but not to take anything away from the other night, certainly when we played Australia a few months ago the intensity was up a couple of levels from what you guys saw the other night, which you’d expect.

“I’ve done a lot of things, but pulling on that New Zealand jersey and even running out on Mount Smart the other night – if something came up and the news came back that I didn’t have too long on the planet, I wouldn’t have to rush out and do a whole lot.

“I think I could die a happy man now that I’ve ticked the Kiwi league box off. But it’s something I want more of, it’s the most excitement I’ve ever had in my life.”

The PDRL Commonwealth Championships final against Australia resulted in a golden point draw at Redcliffe’s Dolphin Oval, with the Kiwis finishing as silver medallists thanks to the green-and-golds’ superior points differential.

Gary rarely does anything in the sporting realm less than full-throttle – and that’s certainly the way he plays his rugby league.

That approach earned him a stint in the sin-bin in the gold medal match from ex-NRL referee Tim Mander for a high shot, but he makes few apologies for his rip-and-tear methods. After all, it’s in his genes.

“I don’t have too many softies in the bloodline – dad’s a really good person obviously, but he played his football physical, and if you’ve met my mother you’ll know I’d have no show of going down the softer side of things,” Endacott quipped.

“It’s New Zealand against Australia, these sort of things happen.

“It’s just one of those things and I tried to tackle a wee bit lower the other night (at Mount Smart) – under instruction from dad I might add!”

Endacott isn’t the only Canterbury player starring on the PDRL scene – Hornby stalwart Phillip Milne featured in the New Zealand side’s Commonwealth Championships campaign, and relative newcomer Joshua Dench joined the pair at Mount Smart last week.

“I work in the disability field and I know the numbers are out there,” said Endacott, who has worked for the Ministry of Education for several years.

“This may sound like a big call, but if it’s done right I can see this becoming the most intense disability-focused sport on the planet.

Continued on next page...

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“It’s catering for all levels of physical ability as well.”

So what’s next for PDRL? Endacott revealed plans are underway for an October tournament in Australia that could include teams from England and Hungary.

He said New Zealand’s participation is dependent on funding, but that support from the NZRL, the Warriors, Sir Peter Leitch and the League 4 Life foundation have provided a solid foundation so far, and Autex Industries – the new co-owners of the Warriors – were also looking to become involved.

“So we do have some people supporting it, but it will come down to financial support for whether we will get to go over in October.

“I’m certainly hoping that’s the case and I’m hoping to be part of it as well.”

October is an eternity away for a player who enjoys the game as much as Gary Endacott, and he gets his rugby league outside the PDRL sphere with his involvement in the Eastside Masters, who coincidentally are run by PDRLNZ board member Bernie Milne.

And although he recently cracked the half-ton in the birthday department, Endacott isn’t entertaining any thoughts of hanging the boots up anytime soon.

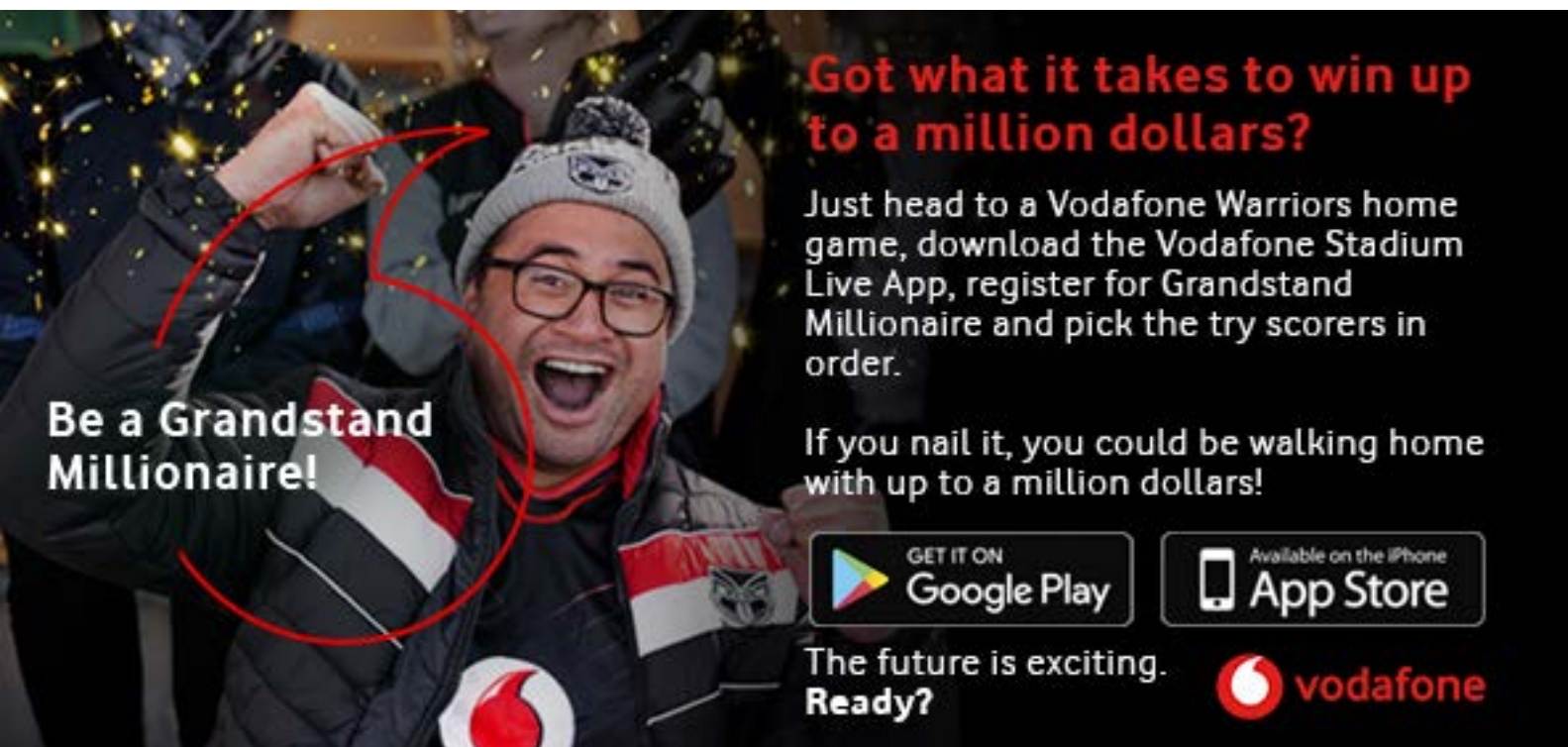
“I don’t say this lightly, but I’ve done three or four different sports – and no disrespect to that, because it’s all been enjoyable in its own way – but I’d chuck it all out the window to do what I’m doing now.

“This is the sport that I love. I love the intensity of it, and it was great to have the Aussies standing in front of you.

“People may think that disabled sports is just about having fun – we like winning just like everyone else and being the best we can be.

“I’ve always tried to beat the odds, so where other people are worrying about age, the good thing about having a disability is it puts things in perspective.

“Apart from a bit of a lack of flexibility my body doesn’t feel a lot different from what it did 20 years ago – just getting up off the ground isn’t quite as easy as it was.”bvv



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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 18

Date/ Venue		Game	Tarsh Ieremaia <i>Flava Star. Moving to the beat.</i>	Joe Vagana <i>League Legend and Machine Lease King.</i>	John Coffey <i>Newsletter Columnist and Veteran Leagueie</i>	Fast Eddie <i>Devonport Dutchman - Takin it easy...</i>	Monty Betham <i>The Warrior Boxer - StepsForLife</i>	Neville Kesha <i>Ex International Referee</i>	High-Tackle Holloway <i>Richmond Bulldog - Old School Richmond Leagueie</i>
Weds 11 July Suncorp	Maroons v Blues	Maroons	Blues	Blues	Maroons	Maroons	Blues	Blues	
Fri 13 July Panthers	Panthers v Sharks	Sharks	Panthers	Sharks	Panthers	Panthers	Panthers	Panthers	
Fri 13 July McDonJames	Knights v Eels	Knights	Knights	Knights	Eels	Eels	Eels	Eels	
Sat 15 July ANZ	Bulldogs v Rabbits	Rabbits	Rabbits	Rabbits	Rabbits	Rabbits	Rabbits	Rabbits	
Sat 14 July Lottoland	Sea Eagles v Storm	Storm	Sea Eagles	Storm	Storm	Storm	Storm	Storm	
Sat 15 July GIO	Raiders v Cowboys	Cowboys	Raiders	Raiders	Cowboys	Raiders	Raiders	Raiders	
Sun 15 July Suncorp	Broncos v Warriors	Warriors	Warriors	Warriors	Warriors	Warriors	Warriors	Warriors	
Sun 15 July Jubilee	Dragons v Tigers	Dragons	Dragons	Dragons	Dragons	Dragons	Dragons	Dragons	
Sun 15 July CBUS	Titans v Roosters	Roosters	Roosters	Roosters	Roosters	Roosters	Roosters	Roosters	

Picks last week	3/4	0/4	3/4	3/4	2/4	3/4	1/4
Total picks	78	73	77	74	71	89	69

Dr Jeckle And Mr Hyde

Dr Jeckle monstered us and all we did was Hyde. When the big dogs barked our guys had no answer. If our boys continue like this the road ahead is very rocky, chucking Hiku under the bus is certainly not the answer. Depressing doesn't cover it...Enough said. Well tonites SOO match (assuming you are reading this on Wednesday) is just as absorbing as the first two, albeit the rubber decided. With the Maroons further decimated (Inglis and Ponga) you would think the bustling Blues would easily continue the winning ways but Suncorp and the full house of rabid Queenslanders baying for Blue blood can have an effect. The maudlin Maroons will grow an extra leg when that roar goes up....but, for all that I reckon the Blues will prevail by 12 for the sweep.

Only 4 games in the bye round, with Origin absentees affecting all teams except the Warriors!! The most pleasing for me was the Raiders finally turning a trick with 3 tries in the last 6 minutes to pinch it off Dean Pays desperate Bulldogs at their old home stronghold Belmore. Mind you the last 7 matches there have yielded only 1 win so the hold maybe not so strong. Dean and Ricky are apparently really good mates but no doubt this will have tested the friendship. The other three matchups were runaways, one I wont bother mentioning again because I am still sulking and too petulant to mention the outstanding display and silky skills of Penriths Junior Kiwi standoff Luai who scored twice and showed Johnson how its done.

Continued on next page...

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The other two were firstly the Storm running rampant over Dragons 52/30, with both sides heavily hit by Origin Duty it gave deposed early season starter Brodie Croft a chance at redemption which he took with both hands in a very lively display alongside his captain the wily Cameron Smith. On the other end of the age scale our soon to retire old mate Hoffman belied his age showing plenty of toe as well making breaks and scoring a longish range try. Secondly up at Cbus the Titans Homies never got a look in as Bennets bashers dissed them !34 zip. The gold Coasters clearly missed Arrow and Wallace but their Brisbane neighbours made light of the absence of Roberts, Oates, Milford, McGuire and McCullogh. Unknown Bronco newbie Kelly Staggs was staggering.

TIPPING Only 4 games to pick and I still stumbled for a 1. Mind you that was one more than my great Richmond mate Big Joe Vagana who likes to chase the longshots. Nifty Nev the Whistle-blower got 3 from 4 for a huge lead and is definitely not getting invited back. Tarsh the FLAVA star, Cool Johnny Coffey and Fast Ed also picked the triple. The devastating Dutchman Fast Eddie has slowly but surely climbed away from the bottom rung to pop up in 4th! How did that happen?

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NZ Resident 16s to take on Samoa this Thursday

By Brooke Hurdell

NZRL

THIS THURSDAY (12 July, 6pm kick-off) the NZ Resident 16s go head-to-head with the NZ Samoa 16s at Puketewhero Park, Rotorua.

Eight players from the Counties Manukau 16s team that took out the National Talent Development Final in March and seven players from the runners-up Northern side will be putting their best foot forward in the black and white jersey.

The side will look to bag their second win in as many years after the cliffhanger against the New Zealand Maori 17s which they narrowly won 32-28.

Catch the livestream for this game on the NZRL Facebook page.

Note: There will be no gate charge for any spectators who wish to attend.

New Zealand Resident 16s v New Zealand Samoa 16s

Thursday, 12 July - 6pm

Puketawhero Park, Rotorua

2018 New Zealand Resident 16s listed by Zone/District:

Akarana: Asolelei Fretton, Lani Graham-Taufa, Lleyton Finau, Luani Tavake Naufahu Whyte, Samuel McIntyre, T.J. Devery, Moala Graham-Taufa; Counties Manukau: Quinnlan Tupou, Sione Moala, Mase Carson, Jarney Proctor-Harwood, Jeremiah Margraff, Otukinekina Kepu, Taniela Otukolo, Valingi Kepu; Bay of Plenty (Upper Central Zone): Dayna Bidois, Legacy Katene; Wellington: Blaine Betham-Taape.

Head Coach: Bejay Hewitt Assistant Coach: Chris Langley Assistant Coach: Eugene Davis Manager: Wayne Boyes Trainer: Sean Witanga



The front page of the Courier Mail today. It's full of State of Origin Queensland content.





Howick's Tony Tuia with son

Howick and Otara shaved for CanTeen

By ARL

OVER \$6,000 was raised between the Howick Hornets and the Otara Scorpions on Saturday, after a number of club members shaved their heads for cancer charity CanTeen.

One of the Auckland Rugby League's major sponsors, SAS Sport, also donated \$1,000 to the cause.

The idea was organised by current CanTeen employee Jeffery Matai who has links to both clubs.

Various club members from premier team players to committee members took part, including Otara-Papatoetoe's Local Board member Reece Autagavaia at Otara.

Otara Scorpion chair Willie Maea said it was a lot of fun to be involved.

"We are always keen on helping with anything like this which impacts people in our community," he said.

Howick club captain Denie Allan shared similar feelings.

"It was great to see so many from the club get involved in the cause, raising some much-needed funds for CanTeen," he said.

"Given it was on the same day the club hosted an ARL livestreamed game, we were able to make a really good event of it."



(Left to right), Reece Autagavaia with Otara Scorpions chair Willie Maea



Fu'e Tuuga from Otara Scorpions



Allen Auckett in action



(Left to right), Denie Allan, Murray Nelson, George Edwards, Allen Auckett and Jeffery Matai



Ah Mau Returning Home On Three-Year Deal

By *Vodafone Warriors*

Leeson Ah Mau during a training session before the Kiwis test in Denver.

Photo www.photosport.nz

EXPERIENCED FRONT rower Leeson Ah Mau is coming back to where his career started after signing a three-year contract with the Vodafone Warriors from next season.

The 28-year-old Otahuhu Leopards junior, who made his NRL debut with the Vodafone Warriors in 2009, is now in his seventh season with the St George Illawarra Dragons and made his Kiwi debut in the June 23 Test against England at Mile High Stadium in Denver.

He has been among the Dragons' best in a campaign in which they have topped the NRL table for most of the season.

A 16-Test Toa Samoa international, Ah Mau has made a total of 169 NRL appearances, 134 of them for the Dragons following 33 for North Queensland in 2010 and 2011 and two for the Vodafone Warriors.

"Leeson will be a wonderful addition to our squad from next season," said Vodafone Warriors head coach Stephen Kearney.

"He's a big forward who is consistently one of the Dragons' best week in, week out. He fits the mould of the type of player we're building our squad around – tough, durable and with a tremendous attitude in all he does on and off the field.

"We've always had an interest in him as did a number of clubs, so we're really excited he was keen to come back home and join the club he started with."

At 185cm and close to 115kg, Ah Mau provides real size in the middle of the park. In his 15 – all but one off the bench – he has averaged 11 runs and 117 metres including 43 post-contact metres a game (a best of 174 metres in round one) plus 20 tackles (a best of

30) and just four missed tackles all season.

He was a foundation member of the Vodafone Warriors' NYC side in 2008 going on to make his NRL debut in the club's first-round clash against Parramatta in 2009.

He represented Toa Samoa at both the 2013 and 2017 Rugby League World Cups as well as the 2014 Four Nations.

LEESON AH MAU

Date of Birth: December 20, 1989

Birthplace: Auckland, NZ

Junior Club: Otahuhu Leopards

Position: Prop

Height: 1.86m

Weight: 113kg

Rep Honours: 1 Test for Kiwis (2018), 16 Tests for Toa Samoa (2013-2017)

Previous Clubs: Vodafone Warriors (2009), North Queensland (2010-2011)

NRL Debut: Vodafone Warriors v Parramatta, Mount Smart Stadium, March 14, 2009 (Round 1)

NRL Career: 166 appearances (2009-2018):
2 appearances for Vodafone Warriors (2009)
33 appearances for North Queensland (2010-2011)

134 appearances for St George Illawarra (2012-2018)

NRL Points: 22 (5 tries, 1 goal)

ARL Match Reports

By ARL

Rd 13 SAS Fox Memorial Match Reports

Howick 39 Mt Albert 30

A storming final quarter lifted Howick to victory over Mt Albert in the Round 13 livestreamed match at Paparoa Park. Three late tries and a field goal saw Howick come back from an eight-point deficit, with halfback Drew Radich the key figure on his way to Man of the Match honours. The victory lifted the Hornets back into the competition's top four.

Marist 6 Glenora 24

Glenora strolled to their 12th-straight win to remain at the top of the SAS Fox Memorial Premiership ladder. After a closely fought opening quarter, a 50-metre runaway try to centre To'o Alo gave Glenora the edge heading into the back end of the first half. Middle forward Shane Hannam was among the Bears' leading performers.

Papakura 6 Northcote 16

Northcote were made to work hard for their victory over Papakura, which keeps them in a comfortable position in third on the ladder. The Tigers scored two tries via Morgan Timoti-Cook and former NRL forward David Bhana, with Nalu Tuigamala's accurate boot accounting for the remainder of their points.

Pt Chevalier 24 Otahuhu 22

Pt Chevalier survived a late scare to edge past a determined Otahuhu, who entered the round inside the competition's top four. The Leopards led at the break, but fell behind after leaking consecutive tries early in the second period. A try with three minutes to go set Otahuhu up with a chance to steal a draw, only for Geronimo Doyle's sideline conversion to fall just short of the posts. Back-rower Lokeni Gavet scored two tries for the Pirates in the win.

Mangere East 46 Richmond 8

On the day Mangere East opened their revamped clubrooms at Walter Massey Park, the Hawks got the job done in convincing fashion on the field. Up 28-0 at half-time, Mangere East kept the foot down in the second with Kalani Ili and Fonitika Lelenga both registering doubles for Matt Pilmer's side.

Rd 11 Crown Lift Trucks Sharman Cup Match Reports

Ellerslie 24 Waitemata 26

Waitemata edged past fourth-placed Ellerslie for a win which reignites the west Auckland side's top eight hopes. The Eagles got out to a 14-point lead early in the encounter, but Waitemata refused to go away, grinding their way back into the match off the back of a strong showing from their forward pack.

Te Atatu 10 Ponsonby 17

A try and drop goal from Damon Niko inside the final five minutes of the game gave Ponsonby an important win over Te Atatu. Locked up at 10-all heading into the final few minutes, Niko proved the difference for the Ponies in a grinding match at Jack Colvin Park.

Manurewa 41 Northern 10

A hat-trick to David-John Phillips and double to Damian Mataroa helped Manurewa to a convincing win over a depleted Northern Brothers. Up 20-0 at the break, the south Aucklanders went on with the job in the second, despite an improved performance from the visitors, who got over for a pair of tries in the back half of the match.

Continued on next page...

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Otara 32 Manukau 10

A big second half saw Otara blow Manukau away, giving the Scorpions a much-needed victory in a period where they have struggled for form. A try was all that separated the two sides at the break, but an improved forward performance saw Otara build momentum in the second, with a number of tries following off the back of it.

New Lynn 22 Franklin 20

New Lynn secured a last-ditch victory over Franklin, with a try three minutes from time and a conversion from James Nathan giving the west Aucklanders victory. The Stags got out to an early 16-0 lead, but Franklin powered back to tie things up as the final five minutes approached. The Storm were left to rue poor goal kicking, which in the end cost them their ninth victory of the year.

Bay Roskill 68 Mt Wellington 12

Bay Roskill cruised to their 11th-straight victory of 2018, to remain undefeated ladder leaders. Off the bench, forward Selwyn Fale was immense for the Vikings, scoring three tries and punishing Mt Wellington with his carries.

Pakuranga 30 Hibiscus Coast 0

Win by default.

State of Origin III Teams:

Queensland Maroons: 1 Billy Slater (c), 2 Valentine Holmes, 3 Dane Gagai, 4 Will Chambers, 5 Corey Oates, 6 Cameron Munster, 7 Daly Cherry-Evans, 8 Jai Arrow, 9 Andrew McCullough, 10 Josh Papanii, 11 Gavin Cooper, 12 Felise Kaufusi, 13 Josh McGuire. Interchange: 14 Ben Hunt, 15 Jarrod Wallace, 16 Coen Hess, 17 Tim Glasby.

NSW Blues: 1 James Tedesco, 2 Tom Trbojevic, 3 Latrell Mitchell, 4 James Roberts, 5 Josh Addo-Carr, 6 James Maloney, 7 Nathan Cleary, 8 David Klemmer, 9 Damien Cook, 10 Paul Vaughan, 11 Boyd Cordner (c), 12 Tyson Frizell, 13 Jack de Belin. Interchange: 14 Tariq Sims, 15 Jake Trbojevic, 16 Angus Crichton, 17 Tyrone Peachey. 18th man: Ryan James





Netball NZ U19 Champs in Tauranga



NETBALL
NEW ZEALAND

THE DEFENDING champion Hamilton City face a must-win match against Invercargill on day two of the Netball NZ U19 Champs if they are to defend their national crown.

The Pourewa Ruri-Clarke captained side made a winning start to their title defence at ASB Baypark Arena in Tauranga on Monday with thrilling derby match against Eastern Waikato.

Both teams were locked at 10-10 at quarter time and again 18-18 at the main break. It was Hamilton City which made the first move to go into the deciding spell with a two-goal advantage.

They looked to have the match in control with a four-goal lead before Eastern Waikato came back strongly in the dying minutes to pull within two – the defending champions eventually winning 27-25.

But Hamilton City are left needing victory over Invercargill in their final pool game to progress after going down 30-41 to Auckland.

Teams play their last championship pool match on Tuesday morning which will determine the tournament's top eight and bottom eight.

From there post-pool play will find the top two teams who meet in the national championship final on Thursday afternoon.

Auckland look favourites to go through unbeaten in Pool A after netting a big win over Invercargill and backing it up with the victory over Hamilton City. They now take on Eastern Waikato which has suffered two narrow losses.

Meanwhile, Wellington has made a strong start in Pool C and should go through to the top eight after

convincing wins over both Howick Pakuranga (44-30) and Christchurch (40-28) while North Harbour are well placed in Pool D.

The Julie Kelman-Poto coached North Harbour side netted 40 or more goals in both of their outings on Monday for comfortable wins and play Hutt Valley in their final pool game.

Tuesday's match-up between Christchurch and Howick Pakuranga will decide which of the two teams reach the top eight from Pool C while Whangarei and Waitakere look to be playing out for the second seeding in Pool D.

There were some variable results recorded in Pool B where last years' runners-up Manawatu looking to emerge as the top ranked team after netting two wins on the opening day.

They meet Selwyn in their final pool game while Dunedin and Harbourside will go head-to-head to see which side joins Manawatu in the top half of the draw.

Both teams netted convincing wins over Selwyn but Dunedin, which boasts four Beko Netball League players in its ranks, fared better in its loss to Manawatu on Monday afternoon.



NETBALL
NEW ZEALAND

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(framed)



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signed All Black
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Warriors Jersey

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- **Time:** 7.30pm
- **Where:** Belfast Rugby Club Rooms
- **MC:** Norm Withers

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Les McFadden 0274633664 or Norm Withers 0272244766



Ian MONKEYING around in BALI. Ian and Marcia are lounge members and are in Bali enjoying 27 deg and looking forward to friday nights game against Penrith.

I've got my program for tonight's big State of Origin game a bloody good read as well...

ORIGIN III OUT NOW: Our final 2018 Origin program is choc-full of content including Billy's farewell, Daly Cherry-Evans, Tariq Sims, Mitchell & Addo-Carr, plus chats with James Tedesco and Josh McGuire, Origin legends, game-breakers and MORE!



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