



Sir Peter Leitch Club

AT MT SMART STADIUM, HOME OF THE MIGHTY VODAFONE WARRIORS

8th August 2018

Newsletter #229



Vodafone Warriors Tame the Dragons



Photos courtesy of www.photosport.nz

Signed Jersey Winners

Congratulations to the winners. Don't forget to send us a photo of you with the jersey. Thanks to everyone that entered, better luck next time.

Peter Hawley - Gore

Bob McRae - Auckland

D Schwass - Te Puke

Chris Olding - Rolleston

Marty Kim Dawes - Masterton

Phil Garner - Canberra
Australia

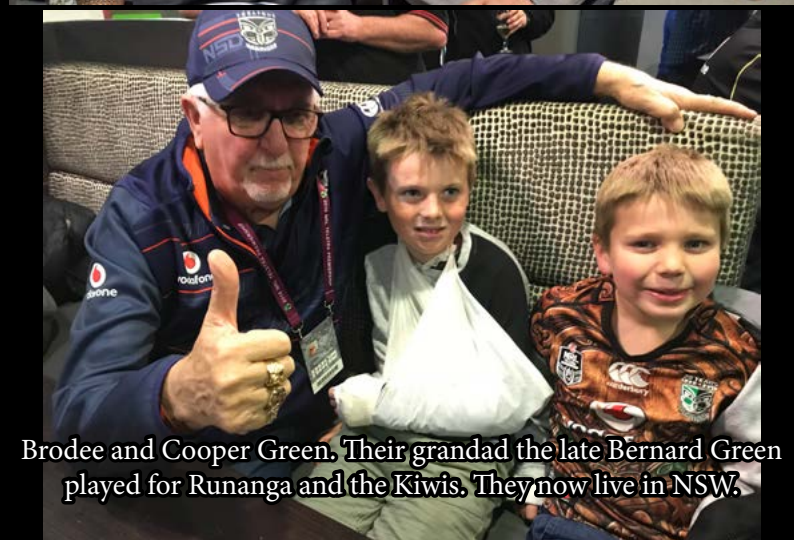
Brad Tacon - Greymouth

Sue Taylor - Waitara

Michael Makaua - Auckland

Olly Burke - Gore





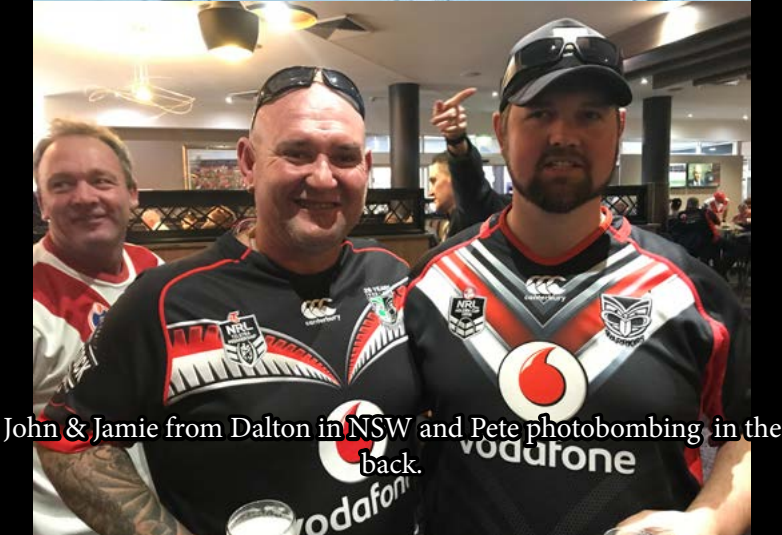
Brodee and Cooper Green. Their grandad the late Bernard Green played for Runanga and the Kiwis. They now live in NSW.



From the left Marty and his two sons Reece and Kyle with Matt who photobombed. They drove three hours for the game..



Great to Mark Carter. Kiwi from Foxton living in Australia.



John & Jamie from Dalton in NSW and Pete photobombing in the back.



Luke's from Rotorua and Duncan from Whakatane both living in Aussie.



Our fans in the stand at Wollongong who came in the members bus about 2 & half hour trip from Sydney.



Peter Young: Videographer - Runs the media within the club, Adam Blair: Rock star player and Sam Mulholland: Analyst - Manages all the performance data and video footage for the coaches and players to self-reflect and improve their skills.



Great to catch up Sarah Teasdale originally from the West Coast now living in Aussie.



Great to meet Michael Bloke from big league magazine at the game.



Joshua and his dad Dean. Ex kiwis living in Penrith now.



Kiwi (real name) from NZ and Chris from Aus. Down from Brisbane to watch the big game.



Kyle Kouka. Sela. Mana, Hinemoa and Taawera. All living in Wollongong with the Vodafone Warriors Ceo Cameron George.



Peter Joe from New Plymouth now residing in Sydney and Nick Phillips from Christchurch now residing in Sydney (shout out to the Halswell Hornets & Victoria Hunters).



Luke set for 250th in Women in League clash

by Richard Becht

VODAFONE WARRIORS v NEWCASTLE KNIGHTS

8.00pm, Friday, August 10, 2018
Mount Smart Stadium, Auckland

VETERAN HOOKER Issac Luke is set to bring up his 250th career appearance when he lines up in an unchanged starting side for the Vodafone Warriors' Harvey Norman Women in League clash against Newcastle at Mount Smart Stadium on Friday night (8.00pm kick-off; match day sponsor: Harvey Norman).

The 31-year-old Luke, who has been in outstanding form this season, was on target to achieve the 250-game milestone against St George Illawarra last weekend until a calf injury side-lined him for the Gold Coast defeat on July 29.

Returning for his 249th game last weekend, Luke produced another stellar performance in the memorable 18-12 win over the Dragons. He scored a try – his fifth of the season – made five dummy half runs and came up with 49 tackles.

The 43-Test Kiwi plays his 62nd game for the Vodafone Warriors on Friday after moving to Mount Smart Stadium in 2016 following 188 games for South Sydney since his debut in 2007.

Luke will take his place in a starting line-up unchanged from the one used in the club's first win over the Dragons in 11 attempts at Wollongong's WIN Stadium.

Adam Blair will again be on the right edge this week with Simon Mannering at loose forward for his 297th NRL appearance.

Buntty Afoa has been included on the bench with the club hoping to overturn a one-match suspension he's facing for a dangerous contact charge from Saturday's match.

Also listed in the four frontline choices on the bench are utility Jazz Tevaga – coming off an exceptional 56 tackles on Saturday – plus Leivaha Pulu and utility back Peta Hiku.

The other four players completing the extended bench are centre Anthony Gelling, back rower Joseph Vuna, prop Chris Satae and hooker Karl Lawton.

Friday's night encounter is the only meeting between the Vodafone Warriors and the 11th-placed Knights this season.

Having achieved the best away record in the club's history last week – 8-3 with one game to go – the Vodafone Warriors go into the match in eighth spot on 26 points. A win in this match would give them their 13th victory of the year, their best regular-season return since 2011.

In 38 matches so far, the Vodafone Warriors have a 19-18 edge over Newcastle with one match drawn.

The Knights won the last time the teams met in Newcastle last year following four wins on end by the Vodafone Warriors. The Vodafone Warriors have won 11 of the last 12 matches against the Knights in Auckland, their last loss coming in 2012.

Vodafone Warriors

- 1 Roger Tuivasa-Sheck
- 2 David Fusitu'a
- 3 Gerard Beale
- 4 Solomone Kata
- 5 Ken Maumalo
- 6 Blake Green
- 7 Shaun Johnson
- 8 James Gavet
- 9 Issac Luke
- 10 Agnatius Paasi

Newcastle Knights

- 11 Isaiah Papali'i
- 12 Adam Blair
- 13 Simon Mannering
- Interchange:
- 14 Jazz Tevaga
- 15 Leivaha Pulu
- 16 Buntty Afoa
- 17 Peta Hiku
- 18 Anthony Gelling
- 20 Joseph Vuna
- 21 Chris Satae
- 22 Karl Lawton

Gates Open: 5.30pm

Curtain Raiser: 5.45pm

NRL Game: 8.05pm

Full time 9.40pm

This has gone a bit far

By David Kemeys

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



LET HE who is without sin throw the first stone, or so the Bible says, a warning not to judge that I have miserably failed to listen to many times, as a confirmed criticiser of referees.

But I never thought I would see the day when that other champion of bagging the men in yellow, Canberra coach Ricky Stuart, and I, would be on the same side of the debate.

But Ricky has come out swinging after referee Matt Cecchin announced that the death threats he had received were the final straw, and he was calling time of his whistle-blowing career.

Death threats? Grow up.

Yes I get as pissed as the next fan with the inconsistencies we suffer, the blunders, the Bunker howlers, and I will admit it - I am a conspiracy theorist and am none too convinced the Warriors get even-handed treatment.

But death threats? Get a life.

England's Super League has invited Cecchin to referee in England if he wants a fresh start, and good on them. Why wouldn't they want a ref who has controlled more than 300 first-grade games?

Stuart has probably been fined more than I will earn in a lifetime for bagging refs, but even he erupted, lashing out at "weak people" pushing Cecchin out.

The Canberra coach said he sympathised with Cecchin and the anguish he goes through.

But here is where it gets really ugly. The death threats came after the Tonga-England Rugby World Cup semi-final, you will remember, when he didn't go upstairs at the death for what many – all of them for Tonga – believed could have been a try.

We don't know, although you don't have to be a genius to figure it out, where the death threats were coming from.

Don't make the mistake of painting Tonga fans as the villains though. They made the World Cup, and the fans I walked out of Mt Smart with that night, shook the hands of England fans, congratulated them, gave them Tonga flags, high-fived, wished them the best for the final and generally were as amazing in defeat as they had been in victory.

Put the blame where it lies – on one or two deluded arseholes.

But that level of abuse has continued this year during the NRL – which has to take some of the responsibility for instructing the refs to blow the pea out of the whistle in the early rounds, then telling them to do the opposite in the middle.

It is so easy to lose sight of the fact that these are just people, ordinary people like us.

Funnily enough I admire Cecchin because as a battler of a spot of mental illness myself, he has been brave enough to talk about his won battles, and admit he takes it to heart if he does not referee well.

I can recall watching Canberra play Melbourne, and Cecchin had to be escorted off the field.

Stuart sums it up though, saying the refs have been given a virtually impossible job.

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“There's going to be one or two or three big mistakes in every game but there's not a referee who wants to go out there and make an error, there's not a player who wants to drop a ball, there's not a coach who wants to lose.

“Criticism is one thing, abuse is another.”

Ironic then that Canberra were on the end of another forward pass loss, this time to Penrith, going down 40-31 to a pass I could see was forward from my lounge.

Cecchin didn't see it, though he got no help from his touchies, who as far as I can tell are only there to say they never see anything, and all decisions should go upstairs.

Ricky again: “I don't know, mate. I don't want to get embroiled in that side of it again. That's just marked our season, that's why we're not in the eight.”

David Gets The Nod

Great to see Winger David Fusitu'a, although he is the only Vodafone Warrior, named in the 2018 NRL team, as voted by his fellow players.

He had a couple of howlers at the weekend, but also showed great courage not to go into his shell and responded with some startling defence.

Fusitu'a got 21 per cent of the vote, behind the Storm's Josh Addo-Carr (27 per cent).

The side is picked by 117 NRL players across all 16 clubs.

Issac Luke just missed out, voted second best hooker behind Cameron Smith, while Roger Tuivasa-Sheck (10 per cent) was third-best fullback behind Billy Slater (60 per cent) and Newcastle's Kalyn Ponga (11 per cent).

Team of the Year: Slater, Addo-Carr, Will Chambers, Greg Inglis, Fusitu'a, James Maloney, Johnathan Thurston, Sam Burgess, Smith, Jake Trbojevic, Tyson Frizell, Matt Gillett, Jason Taumalolo. Coach: Craig Bellamy.

On A Positive Note

How good was that? Confession time, I did not expect it. I hoped for a better performance than the nonsense we got served up on the Gold Coast, wanted to believe we could do another of our astonishing bounce backs, but thought the Dragons would get

the honours.

Don't recall ever being so delighted to be wrong.

But we are a funny lot.

Last week after the Titans it was all doom and gloom, and the wheels have fallen off, and that idiot Stephen Kearney needs a rocket, and so on.

This week it is all we have guaranteed our finals spot.

Both views are equally wrong.

It is pretty clear the wheels haven't fallen off, but nor is a spot in the finals guaranteed.

And that is where Stephen Kearney is earning his money, praising our resilience but pouring cold water on any talk of deep we can in the finals.

He didn't hold back after the Titans, labelling the performance “soft” – which is pretty damning criticism for him, and he was delighted with Saturday's response, but quickly warned there is more work to do yet.

“This was just about getting back to focusing on what we've done well this year and what works for us. If we don't keep our focus nice and clear on the task at hand, as opposed to the bigger picture, you can find yourself in a bit of trouble.”

If you think about it for a moment we are exactly where most of us thought we would be after these two games, two points better off, it's just that most of us thought we would get them against the Titans and drop them to the Dragons.

That said, as a fan you are entitled to enjoy this one, given some of our players weren't even born when we last won in Woollongong in 1996 – 22 years ago.

Hate to ban on about it, but I will.

Just four games to go and 30-points needed – though 28 might get it done, depends what the chasing Tigers can serve up.

Our run home is good, three of the last four at Mt Smart, starting with the Knights on Friday, and we have to get the job done against them to ease the pressure valve and give ourselves breathing space.

If we can do that, we need just one win from our last three.

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We should travel to Australia knowing beating the Bulldogs will guarantee our spot, but suddenly the Dogs don't look the total shambles they have looked all year. Just our luck

Our last two are both Friday nights at home, the Panthers and the Raiders, and here's hoping we have the job done by then.

Week Away Pays Off

The decision to remain in camp in Australia for the week looks like coaching genius now does it not?

Kearney was direct. "We had to have a decent look at ourselves after the Titans and the guys responded really well during the week. We prepared well, trained well and to come out against a top-four team, I thought the way the guys hung in there to get the result was a real positive."

Too bloody right it was.

This one was another major test of character.

Watching on the TV was painful, with the commentators raving of course about how good the Dragons were and how poor we were, how tired we looked, dispirited etc.

To be fair, we were not off to a great start, but did really dig in and came back into it to the extent that when we went off at half-time at 18-0 ahead, the commentators were going backwards faster than the French army.

What a momentum killer the break was though.

The Dragons second 40 was outstanding.

Ours not so much, but only because we failed to turn up for the first 10 – after that, if the Dragons were outstanding, logic tells you we must have been even better, showing enormous courage and spirit in defence to keep them out.

We got hammered – again – in the penalty count, 6-1 in the second half, still we hung in there.

In the end we had racked up over 50 more tackles than the Dragons, missed almost 50 tackles, played the game almost entirely in our own half without the ball, and yet we still stopped them coming over the top of us.

For me, young Isaiah Papali'i was just incredible,

standing up to anything – and there was a lot - thrown at him, while Jazz Tevaga did a Simon Man-nering – making 56 tackles, and Simon and Issac Luke chipped in with more than 40 each.

My Kind Of Six-pointer

If you can't stick it down under the black dot, the next best thing is the try-saving tackle that prevents you opponents from getting over.

And that is what Roger Tuivasa-Sheck did with his effort right on half-time. I won't call it a try-saving tackle, because that implies he made the stop before his opposite could get over the line.

In RTS's case Tim Lafai was already over the line, but RTS stripped him in the act of scoring, a play it is impossible to measure the significance of.

Roger was brilliant, maybe even having his best game for us, hitting 239 metres and looking to inject himself into the game at every opportunity.

"I had to take it a bit personal, come out and make sure I had myself ready to go. Too many times I was trying to get the team up and pumping but I forgot about my own performance and preparation. That's what was today was about, just getting myself ready to go."

Kearney was pretty happy too.

"There's been a number of times this year where Roger's come up with a play like that. He sets a high standard. He's not happy if he gets an eight out of 10 so this week I could just see it in his body language. He was very determined to make sure he led the way."

New Record

If nothing else, we have set a new club record this season, most away wins - eight. We could go even higher of course, with the Bulldogs in Sydney in a fortnight.

Sacre Bleu!

Former Warriors assistant-coach Steve McNamara has guided his Catalan Dragons to a major Super League upset 35-16 over St Helens to reach the Challenge Cup final.

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They will play Warrington, who thrashed the Leeds 48-12 in the other semi.

Former Vodafone Warrior Louis Anderson has been based in Perpignan since 2012 and came off the bench in the game.

The 33-year-old played 67 games for the Warriors between 2004 and 2007 and will be facing his former club in the final, having played more than 100 games for Warrington between 2008-11.

Who'd Be A Coach?

Travelling fifth, recovering from big deficits to win against the odds and scoring points like there is no tomorrow, yet the Penrith Panthers have told coach Anthony Griffin not to let the door hit him in the arse on his way out.

With more than two years to run on his contract, he's been sacked a few weeks out from the finals, with his assistant Cameron Ciraldo to take over.



Sir Peter was happy to catch up with St. George legendary halfback, Billy Smith, at the Warriors-Dragons game in Wollongong on Saturday. Now 76, Billy played 26 Tests for Australia, including one as captain. With the great St. George club, he was a member of four winning Grand Final teams, 1963-1966. He holds the record for the most grade games with St. George, 296, of which 234 were in first grade. Billy began his career with Saints in 1961 as an 18 year old and finished after 17 seasons, in 1977. He played in two Australian World Cup winning teams, 1968 and 1970, while he also toured new Zealand with the 1965 Australian team, as well as England and France with the 1967 Kangaroos. Still mentally fit and alert, Billy has some problems with his knees which restricts his walking ability.

Ever wonder what Jim Doyle is up to these days? Then check out this article I found in the Sydney Morning Herald

Doyle back at NRL to bring 'agent overhaul' to fruition by November

EXCLUSIVE

DAVID RICCIO

RESPECTED rugby league administrator Jim Doyle has returned to the NRL to help clean up the murky world of player agents.

Doyle, who previously spent 12 months as second-in-charge of the NRL before

spending almost four years as CEO of the Warriors, has returned to League Central as a consultant.

He is working on several projects but his 'agent overhaul' brief couldn't be any more significant.

Under a new plan to regulate the game's most influential movers and shakers, Doyle is working in conjunction with

the NRL legal department to write the rule book that will ensure player agents face sanctions and bans the same as any player, coach or official.

As it stands, accredited NRL agents are bound to their own accreditation guidelines and independent committee.

It's been suggested the current structure, in part, is one reason why the NRL has strug-

gled to bring down the hammer on any agents found to have played a role in the Parramatta salary cap scandal.

Having obtained support and sign-off from the players via the Rugby League Players Association during the last round of CBA negotiations, Doyle has been charged with bringing the agents under the same NRL rules and guidelines

which every other registered participant must fall under.

Doyle also has the full support of the 16 NRL clubs. The NRL intends to set up an accreditation committee and process that would have agents register their accreditation with the NRL.

Just like a player, they would then be bound by the NRL's code of conduct and

ethics. During the accreditation phase, agents would also be required to show why they believe they're a suitable representative of a player.

Should they fall foul of NRL rules, they would face a breach notice and or deregistration, similar to any player or official.

The NRL wants the new agent accreditation scheme to commence by November 1.

In Aussie

By Sir Peter Leitch



GREAT TO be in Australia, but even better to be home.

Obviously I was delighted with our win but let me tell you about something special that was a major factor in my even going to Australia, and it is something that underlines what a family we league lovers are.

I had the honour of being included in a delegation that visited the Dapto Canaries, a league team up Woollongong way.

I travelled there with six mates from Waitara, members of the respected Tamati whanau, including Howie, the former Kiwis skipper and coach, and two of his brothers.

But it was no lads following the footy trip, it was a chance for the Tamati whanau to acknowledge the support of a man named Tony Clackin, who took a young Waitara league player named Tory Brunning under his wing when he arrived to play for the club, showing him enormous kindness and fostering him so he could pursue his dream in Australia.

Tory, a nephew of the Tamati whanau, showed enough skill to go on to represent Australia Secondary Schools as a 15-year-old, but tragically died aged just 22 while playing for the Canaries.

I joined the ceremony on Sunday and was quite moved as a pukaia that commemorates his life was presented to the club by Howie and his brother Terri.



The presentation of this Pukaia by Howie and Teri Tamati was made to the Dapto Canaries Rugby League Club in Illawarra to commemorate the life of Tory Brunning who came from Waitara, Taranaki to follow his dream of playing in the NRL. Whilst playing for the Dapto Canaries Tory fell ill and never recovered.

It was a great honour to have asked to have been included and it brought home to me how the game we love is so much more than 80 minutes of football. It is about friendships that endure, bonds between families, and respecting all who show us that humanity is more important than any game.

The hospitality we were shown was outstanding. We all stayed at Tony's place and while I have stayed in top hotels around the world, I reckon Tony's place is up there with the best of them.

We also had the pleasure of going to a barbecue at Tory's girlfriend's place, and it was fir for royalty, top seafood and brilliant meat cuts – owning a fish shop and a butchery helps!

Even the club's president Tony O'Donnell turned up to meet us and extend some hospitality

It was an experience I feel blessed to have been able to share in, and one that has so reminded me why I love this game.



The Dapto Canaries rugby league club president Tony O'Donnell presents me with my polo shirt



This the team I went to Aussie with and our host Tony on the far right all decked out in our Dapto polos the club gave us



My mate Howie Tamati MBE. President of the NZRL



Phillip Orchard at full throttle



By John Coffey

Phillip Orchard's Unforgettable Tour

IT WAS my privilege to be the New Zealand Press Association correspondent with the 1971 Kiwis. Having already watched them dismantle a fine Kangaroos team 24-3 at Carlaw Park earlier in the season, I was fortunate to also cover their Test series victories in Britain (the first since the 1907-08 All Golds) and France to complete a unique Grand Slam. No one was grander or slammed the opposition harder than Phillip Orchard.

Sadly, Phillip died in his Rotorua home town on July 29, one day after his 70th birthday. He is still the record holder for most Kiwis tries in all games (40 tries in 47 appearances) and for the most tries on one tour (27 tries in 19 appearances). For a time he shared the Test record of 15 with fellow NZRL Team of the Century wing Tom Hadfield, who also passed away earlier this year. Both were also inducted into the NZRL Legends of League.

My first sighting of Phillip was at the Addington Show Grounds in Christchurch when he scored the winning try for the 1963 Schoolboy Kiwis against their NSW counterparts. I can still picture him surging around the cover defence to complete a 6-3 scoreline. Six years later he was charging down the grandstand sideline at Carlaw Park to score the match-winning try against Australia in his senior Test debut. The boy had become a man.

Hailing from Ngongataha, Phillip and brothers Robert, Eddie and John dominated the local club scene and earned Bay of Plenty respect at provincial level. But they lacked the training advantages available in bigger centres, especially Auckland, and needed plenty of on-field action to attain full fitness. That might explain why Phillip did not play in the mid-1971 home win over Australia, though front-rower Robert was a try-scorer.

The other scorers at Carlaw Park were Wellington's John Whittaker (two) on the right wing and Canterbury's Mocky Brereton on the left. So when the 1971 tour started in late August Phillip was at best third-ranked among the wings, with Auckland's Bob McGuinn also keen to push strongly for Test selection. In two warm-up games against amateur opposition in London all four raced over for multiple tries and the contest was on.

When the official tour started Orchard claimed two tries in a 23-8 win over Rochdale Hornets and Brereton countered with the only two Kiwis tries in an 8-18 loss to St Helens. Whittaker was tried at centre in one game but, having lost four of their six pre-Test matches, the success of the tour was in the balance and coach Lory Blanchard had problems to solve. One area with an over-abundance of riches was the flanks of his backline.vv

Mike McClennan was the only specialist fullback on tour and had not replicated his form from the home Test victory over Australia. So Blanchard switched the willowy Whittaker to fullback, promoted Orchard to the now vacant right wing and retained Brereton on the left. They were to prove a devastating combination: three big, fast, strong men running the ball back at, and frequently through, their stunned opponents.

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Whittaker played so well at fullback that British scribes would not believe Blanchard when he told them he had never played there before. Brereton was consistently very good, not just a finisher but an all-rounder who had proven himself at centre for his club and province. Over on the right side Orchard was simply out of this world. Every time I hear commentators refer to someone as “unstoppable” I think of Phillip Orchard.

Whenever boy wonder Dennis Williams, inspiring captain Roy Christian or silky centre Bernie Lowther gave Orchard the ball with room to get those massive thighs pumping, one almost felt sorry for the British and French wings and fullbacks. Last week the Kiwi League Show paid tribute to Orchard, showing a few black-and-white replays of him humbling the mere mortals who had been charged with stopping him.

Against Great Britain Orchard scored one try in the first Test and two more when the series was won at Castleford. Blanchard rested him from the third because of a minor injury so he would be ready for the French. Orchard responded with three tries in the first Test and two more in the series-clincher at Carcassonne. His sequence was halted only by the Toulouse mud in a 3-3 third-Test draw. Eight tries in five Tests.

Nor were the club players in Britain or the regional representatives in France spared the Orchard rampage and it became increasingly clear that 1955-56 Kiwis wing Vern Bakalich's try-scoring record was under threat. Bakalich had touched down 26 times in 30 appearances on his considerably longer tour of Britain and France. As the 1971 itinerary advanced Orchard steadily chipped away at Bakalich's record.

In the press box we kept ticking off Orchard's tries, one here, two there, and then four against Bradford Northern in a 30-23 win at Odsal Stadium. His double in the second French Test pushed him ahead of Bakalich, to 27. Remarkably, Orchard made just 19 appearances and scored at least one try in 15 of them. Brereton was the next most prolific try-scorer with 12 in 20 appearances. Between them, 39 games, 39 tries.

There will never be another tour like it. No longer do Kiwis represent Ngongataha, Randwick and Marist-Western Suburbs as Orchard, Whittaker and Brereton did, three cheerful young men whose respective day jobs were plasterer, butcher and policeman. No longer can Kiwis spend 100 days touring on meagre allowances, staying in old hotels, travelling on wheezing buses and creating indelible memories. RIP Phillip Orchard.



By Barry Ross



Solomone Kata celebrates scoring his second try.

Photo www.photosport.nz

Penalties

DESPITE BEING on the wrong end of the penalty count for the eighth successive game, the Warriors scored an impressive and important 18-12 win over St. George/Illawarra at Wollongong on Saturday afternoon. The New Zealanders were penalised 10 times by the referees, while the home team were penalised on six occasions.

The penalty situation must be alarming to the coaching staff. I have no doubt coach Kearney has discussed this issue with his staff and the team, but on my count, the Warriors have only finished on the right side of the penalty count in four of their 20 games this year. This season has brought plenty of refereeing and bunker mistakes, many of which have been publicly acknowledged by the referee's boss. Have these errors contributed to the Warriors penalty count record? On the NRL website last Sunday night, the Warriors were the fourth most penalised team, behind the Titans, Manly and the Raiders. It is no coincidence that the three teams above the Warriors will not play in the big end of season matches. It is also a big plus that the Warriors have overcome this to be in the top eight.

Wollongong has not been a happy hunting ground for the Warriors and Saturday's victory was just their second in 13 attempts at the venue. The win was the Warriors first ever against St. George/Illawarra at Wollongong and the only other win at this stadium was on 28 April 1996, when the Warriors beat the old Illawarra Steelers 30-20. Current coach, Stephen Kearney, was in the second row, former All Black winger, John Kirwan, now Sir John, was at fullback, Stacey Jones was the five eighth and current Fox TV commentator, Greg Alexander, was the halfback.

I made the one hour drive south from my Sydney home for the game and I was a pleased that I did this. I was lucky enough to be able to watch the game from a private room in the northern stand, where a reunion was held for former Illawarra Steelers players, coaching staff and administrators. Sir Peter Leitch and the President of the New Zealand Rugby League, Howie Tamati and their Maori friends also enjoyed the function and were extremely happy with the result. It was a first class effort from all the Warriors, coming off the previous week's loss to the Titans. The Dragons had 54 percent of possession and the New Zealanders had to make 43 more tackles than their opponents. In the second half particularly, the Warriors defence was first class and although he only played 65 minutes of the game, Jazz Tévaga topped the tackle count with 56. As if anyone needed reminding, Roger Tuivasa-Sheck showed just what a classy fullback he is with 239 running metres and two linebreaks. So far this season, Roger has ran for 3,151 metres to be fourth on this list. This is a match average of 175 metres from his 18 games in 2018.

If all goes well, Simon Mannering will celebrate his 300th first grade NRL game at Mt. Smart Stadium on Friday night 31 August against the Canberra Raiders. Simon has scored 63 tries in his 296 NRL matches. He has given tremendous service to the Warriors in his 14 seasons with the club. Simon will turn 32 three days before the Raiders game.

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The recent 2018 players poll on the NRL website gave plenty of recognition to the Warriors club. Players are the best judges of their opponents' and their opinions are valued. Issac Luke was named as the second best hooker, behind Cameron Smith, David Fusitu'a the second best winger (behind Josh Addo-Carr) and Roger Tuivasa-Sheck, the second hardest to tackle (behind Jason Taumalolo). Shaun Johnson was the third best halfback with the Dragons half, Ben Hunt the second best half and Johnathan Thurston the best. If the vote had have been taken after Saturday's result, Johnson would have been second best. Tohu Harris was named as the fourth best edge forward, with Tyson Frizell the best. Roger Tuivasa-Sheck was also judged the third best fullback behind Billy Slater and Kalyn Ponga.

It was interesting to read the story in Sydney's Sunday Telegraph that next season could begin with a game in Los Angeles. The date mentioned was 10 March and the game would be played on a Saturday night in the USA and screened on a Sunday afternoon on the east coast of Australia. Two stadiums were mentioned as possible venues in the story. The first of these was the StubHub centre (capacity 27,000), which is the home of the LA Galaxy soccer team, while the Los Angeles Charges American Football team also sometimes use it. StubHub is 21 kms south of downtown Los Angeles. The other venue was the Banc of California Stadium (capacity 22,000) at Exposition Park, seven kms south west of downtown Los Angeles. The Los Angeles soccer team in the USA major league play at the Banc of California Stadium, while some rugby union is also played there. No bookings have yet been made by the NRL regarding a venue and there is still plenty to do before the game is confirmed. South Sydney is one of the teams to be considered for the match with the Broncos, the Storm and the Warriors also in the mix. South Sydney owner, Russell Crowe is firmly behind playing a competition game in the USA and he would probably be involved in any promotional work. If the game is confirmed, it would be named round zero and round one would begin on Thursday night, 14 March. To lessen its costs, the NRL will try and arrange a commercial package with companies such as Tourism Australia and an airline.

The South Sydney Roosters clash at ANZ Stadium in Sydney this Friday night is looming as one of the matches of this season. First versus third will be a big attraction, while it will also have an impact of the 2018 minor premiership. Let's hope the Warriors consolidate their final eight position against Newcastle at Mt. Smart just before the Roosters-Souths game. Despite the fact that they cannot make the playoffs, the Knights should not be taken lightly and coach Kearney will make sure his players have their minds on the job. The Storm-Sharks game in Melbourne on Sunday is another big game this weekend. With four games to go before the playoffs, the teams in the top eight will probably remain in this position. But the places in the final eight is far from decided and plenty of twists and turns are ahead of us.



Cappy and CEO warriors Cameron George in the sheds after the great win at St. George WIN stadium last weekend. This is Cappy's last season with the warriors and we wish him all the best and hope we go out with a bang for him.



Great to catch up with ex warrior John Simon who caught up with his old mate and legend Stacey Jones at the St. George game at the weekend. John captained the warriors and played 32 games. He also played for the kangaroos, Australia. You can catch a video I did with John on my Facebook page.

Now The Immortals Have Credibility

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)



UNTIL LAST week there had been a weakness in Australia's much vaunted rugby league Immortals concept. Instead of recognising all of the finest players in what the Aussies call "the greatest game of all", it only acknowledged post-Second World War players – or, more accurately, those who the judges had actually seen in action, dating back to the original quartet named by Rugby League Week in 1981.

Even those who conceived the idea at the now defunct magazine were shocked how it grew in public perception. Clive Churchill, Bob Fulton, Reg Gasnier and Johnny Raper were unveiled – along with their photographs on bottles of vintage port – at the Sydney Cricket Ground 37 years ago. Ageing gracefully, they stood proudly in their Australian jerseys and have been lauded ever since as the very best of the code's players.

Eighteen years later Graeme Langlands, a club-mate of Gasnier and Raper in the mighty St George teams which won eleven consecutive Sydney grand finals from 1956 to 1966, and Wally Lewis, The King of Queensland, joined the originals. Arthur Beetson was the first Indigenous inductee in 2003 and Andrew Johns became the eighth Immortal in 2012. When the magazine folded last year the concept was in limbo.

Rugby league's historians believed the original weakness remained. Because only players the judges had watched live were considered, it inferred only Churchill, the champion Souths fullback of the 1950s, was worthy of inclusion from the game's first half-century. They called Churchill the Little Master. The historians were adamant he who was known as The Master, Dally Messenger, had been unfairly snubbed.

Say what you like about the NRL, it deserved the utmost credit for rescuing the Immortals and also establishing a more celebrated Hall of Fame than that announced for the ARL centennial in 2008 and was little more than a list of 100 great Australian players. They gave the job to former Samoa international Frank Puletua, whose own career included 178 games for Penrith and Souths from 1998 to 2011.

Although some big egos were bruised when the judges were named, the ten men charged with making the decision were inspired. They ignored the expected "maximum of two" policy and named five new Immortals. They realised the greatest pre-war players could fall through the cracks because of the three-strikes policy and to not include them now would be to pass the buck onto the next selection panel in 2022.

NRL chief executive Todd Greenberg had the pleasure of announcing Messenger, a dazzling centre and goal-kicker from the foundation years, Frank Burge, a brilliant try-scoring forward before and after the First World War, and Dave Brown, another centre whose prolific scoring in the 1930s earned him the nickname "the Bradman of League", were all to be inducted, as well as two from the other seven candidates.

The "moderns" were later named as Norm Proven, who played in an amazing ten of those aforementioned eleven St George grand final triumphs and was captain-coach for four of them, and Mal Meninga, the block-busting Canberra centre who in the 1980s and 1990s became the first Kangaroo to make four tours of Britain and France, two of them as captain. At last, all of the game's 9000-plus players had been considered.

New Zealand now has a niche in what had been a totally Australian concept. It was a measure of Messenger's greatness and magnetism that not only did the pioneers know they needed him to successfully establish rugby league in Sydney but the 1907-08 All Golds invited him along on their tour of Britain. Dally M is Kiwi number 15. Messenger made his Kangaroos debut against the All Golds on their homeward journey.

The other candidates were all great footballers – Brian Bevan, the Easts wing who stayed in England after the Second World War to score 796 tries in 696 games; Souths and Easts loose forward Ron Coote, who played in nine grand finals over 11 years and won six; Duncan Hall, a pillar of Queensland and Australian post-war forward packs; flying 1960s wing Ken Irvine, the record-holder for most first grade tries (212) in Australia; and Darren Lockyer, in his day the world's best player at both fullback and five-eighth.

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Lockyer will again be a candidate in 2022, when it is likely the “maximum of two” rule will apply. Players must be retired at least five years, and be members of the Hall of Fame, to be considered as Immortals. Jonathan Thurston, who is retiring this season, will not qualify for 2022 but by 2026 will be considered along with Cameron Smith and Billy Slater. In looking after the past, the selectors have also prepared for the future.

On a night when the brightest stars were recognised, Mark Graham became the first New Zealander inducted into the NRL Hall of Fame. Just as it was the first time that post-war players entered Immortal contention, so, too, it was the first time non-Australians were considered for the Hall of Fame. Graham has won just about every accolade open to him, including NZRL Player of the Century in 2007.

Graham became Hall of Fame member 101, and was joined on stage by fellow inductees Cliff Lyons, Ricky Stuart, Gordon Tallis, Steve Menzies and Petero Civoniceva. There was further significance as to the “internationalising” of the Hall of Fame that legendary Broncos prop Civoniceva was not only born in Suva but also proudly represented Fiji after ending his stellar career with Queensland and the Kangaroos.

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THIS FRIDAY
MT SMART STADIUM
NRL KICK OFF 8:00PM WNRL KICK OFF 6:00PM GATES OPEN 5:45PM





By Miles Davis

Roger Tuivasa-sheck gets through the James Graham tackle.
Photo www.photosport.nz

Warriors and Dragons

WELL THAT was an up and down weekend as far as my sporting emotions went. Firstly there was the Vodafone Warriors taking on the St George Illawarra Dragons. This is a fixture that always makes me feel slightly awkward. I am a devout Dragons fans and had been supporting them long before the Vodafone Warriors came on the scene. But I am also a big supporter of the Vodafone Warriors and am elated when they win and gutted when they lose. Unless they are playing the Dragons. When that happens I manage to put aside my love for the Mt Smart heroes. Manage to suppress my affection for all the players I have grown to know and love over the last 23 years. I am fully focused on the Dragons smashing them and can't wait for the final whistle so I can go back to giving the Vodafone Warriors my total support once more.

For the second time this season I was to be disappointed at the final whistle. The Vodafone Warriors were dominant in the first half and fully deserved their half-time lead. Things did not look good for my Dragons. The second half however saw things change dramatically with the Dragons scoring 2 tries in the first 9 minutes and taking control of the game. Surely it would be only a matter of time before they drew level then went on to win the game. Given the amount of possession and territory they had they should have done so comfortably. But this was not a Vodafone Warriors side that had any intention of folding and giving away 2 precious points. Their defence was phenomenal and the way they hung together as a team was inspirational.

I was predictably gutted at the final whistle but when I awoke the next morning I was in a much better mood. The better team had won and the bonus was that both my teams were in the top 8 and looking good for a play-off spot. Unless something drastic happens with the Dragons' form then it will be the Vodafone Warriors that give me the most enjoyment come the knockout phase.

A more positive sporting experience for me was the England v India 1st Test at Edgbaston. I have always been a great fan of test cricket and feel that it is the ultimate test of a sportsman's mettle. It is a game that can fluctuate from session to session. Allows an individual or a team to fail then have an opportunity to show their mettle and fight back. This test was the classic example of what is great about this format of the game.

England started reasonably well and then at 112-3 Jonny Bairstow joined Joe Root to put on a magnificent 104 run partnership. I started to get excited thinking England were going to pile on a huge score approaching 500. Experience should have taught me better and sure enough India managed to fight back and dismiss England for 287.

India started off well until debutant Sam Curran (who had already put on a cameo batting performance of 24 crucial runs), just 20 years of age, takes 3 wickets in 8 balls and turns the game in England's favour (just 5 months ago I was watching Curran do his stuff for the Auckland Aces in New Zealand's Super Smash competition). India's batting started to crumble. England were surely going to roll them and take a handy first innings lead. But they forgot about the immovable object that was Virat Kohli. A superb 149 from the Indian skipper saw them finish just 13 runs shy of England's first innings total.

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Indian's bowlers put the blowtorch on England's batsmen in the 2nd innings and soon the hosts were 87 for 7, a lead of just 100 and surely headed for defeat. Once again in this test it was young Sam Curran who came to the rescue with a superb knock of 63 off just 65 balls, leading his side to 180 all out. This left India requiring 194 runs to win. Was it going to be enough? Especially with Kohli in such rampant form. England picked up wickets regularly but Kohli was ominously still in the middle. Then up steps the progeny of one of New Zealand rugby league's finest. Ged Stokes' little boy Ben takes up the attack and removes Kohli for 51 (the Indian skipper scoring 200 runs in the game) and follows it up by dismissing two more and leave England unlikely victors by 31 runs. An amazing game of cricket and a great sporting spectacle. Can't wait for the next 4 tests.

The final major sporting event of the weekend was a tougher one to swallow for a die-hard Wellington and Hurricanes fan. The Crusaders winning back to back Super Rugby titles. But no matter how much sporting pain the Village of the Damned has inflicted on me over the decades one can only admire what they manage to achieve. It doesn't matter who is out injured or away on All Black duty they somehow manage to dredge up replacements that perform to the same high level as those who they replace. The Crusaders (and Canterbury) culture is an example to every other sporting outfit in the world. They were far and away the best side in the competition and fully deserved their win. Now I am off to wash my mouth out with soap.

Steve And Louis Off To Wembley

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)



FORMER WARRIORS assistant coach Steve McNamara and 2004-07 Warrior Louis Anderson are off to Wembley Stadium in London later this month after their French club Catalans Dragons spectacularly qualified for the 2018 Super League Challenge Cup Final.

They will be joined by former Kiwis prop Sam Moa, who scored a try in last weekend's 35-16 semi-final upset of hot favourite St Helens. The Dragons led 27-0 at halftime and were never seriously threatened after that. McNamara is in his first full season as Catalans coach.

McNamara played in the 1997 Cup final, when Bradford Bulls lost to St Helens 32-22. This will be the Perpignan-based club's second final. Warriors legend Stacey Jones captained the Dragons in 2007 when they lost 30-8 to a St Helens team coached by Daniel Anderson.

Catalans' opponent at Wembley will be Warrington Wolves, who hammered Leeds Rhinos 48-12 in the other semi-final. Former Kiwis centre Bryson Goodwin scored the last try in the one-sided encounter. The final will be played on August 25 (early morning August 26 NZ time).

Game Day Special. Available only at the grounds!





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

The Mad Butchers Weekly NRL Tipping Comp.

By John Holloway

vc

NRL Round 22

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>
Thurs 9 Aug 1300smiles	Cowboys v Broncos	Cowboys	Broncos	Broncos	Broncos	Broncos	Broncos	Cowboys
Fri 10 Aug Mt Smart	Warriors v Knights	Warriors	Warriors	Warriors	Warriors	Warriors	Warriors	Warriors
Fri 10 Aug ANZ	Rabbits v Roosters	Rabbits	Roosters	Rabbits	Roosters	Rabbits	Roosters	Rabbits
Sat 11 Aug CBus	Titans v panthers	Panthers	Panthers	Panthers	Panthers	Panthers	Panthers	Panthers
Sat 11 Aug McGrath foundation	Sea eagles v Bulldogs	Bulldogs	Sea Eagles	SeaEagles	Bulldogs	Bulldogs	Sea Eagles	Sea Eagles
Sat 11 Aug ANZ	Eels v Drag- ons	Dragons	Eels	Dragons	Dragons	Dragons	Eels	Eels
Sun 12 Aug GIO	Raiders v Tigers	Raiders	Raiders	Raiders	Tigers	Raiders	Tigers	Raiders
Sun 12 Aug AAMI	Storm v Sharks	Storm	Storm	Storm	Storm	Storm	Storm	Sharks

Picks last week	3/8	4/8	4/8	5/8	4/8	4/8	6/8
Total picks	98	89	99	95	92	105	89

Puttin The D in Defence...

THE REFS decided to give our boys some tackling practice this round and the Mighty Warriors accepted the challenge. Given the incredible number of extra sets we faced the scramble and desperation and tackle accuracy was outstanding. Capitulation not on the menu. To a man the homies stood tall and unbending right to the end, unbelievable edge of the seat stuff for the faithful. RTS led like the champion that he is, the rest well they just rolled up the sleeves and stayed glued on task. Truth be told I wasn't expecting the points this week, history and all but as they have done several times this season the boys surprised me. I was reminded of the Corvo factor as we just kept turning up ready to die for the cause. Kia kaha Warriors. The path ahead remains a testing one with several twists and turns on offer. The Top 4 is tantalizing close above but the precipice at the bottom edge of the 8 still looms below. We live in exciting times eh. What about the battle of the bottom, we came close to all 3 sides winning at the weekend. The Eels knocked off the Titans 28/12, the Sea Eagles defied logic to tip over the shifty Sharks 33/32 and the Cowboys were desperately unlucky to come second to the Chooks 20/26, The old Master JT pulling every trick in the book to get his side home but not quite... a thriller with a bitter pill to swallow for the far North Rustlers. The comeback king Panthers spoiled yet another promising day for rueful Ricky and his unlucky rampant Raiders. The deadly Green machine duo of the Rapier Rapana and Joey the Jaguar leilua were unstoppable and young gun Cotric right on their heels but alas at the death the fickle finger of fate allowed a Maloney forward pass to go unnoticed and pointed in favour of the The Blue mountains gang 40/31.

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Another turn-up at ANZ in the opener with Dean Pays desperado Doggies doing it to the highly fancied Bennett Broncos 36/22 who could pick that? go figure. Mr Clearys Tigers got back on the bike and rolled past the Knights 25/16 it looked even for a good period but the tables turned. What a fascinating week ahead, more possible scenarios than you can poke a stick at. If we can stick it up the Knights and The Storm can shaft the Sharks we can nip up the ladder. If the Roosters bop the Bunnies (I don't think so) they could go top. The Dragons should be wary of the slippery Eel and the Tigers will need sharp claws to scratch the revenge bent Raiders at Canberra. The Titans can prove tricky at home so the Panthers need to stay sharp. Up at 1300smiles the Cowboys will be hoping to keep on the improve for the local derby with the bucking Broncos. DCE and the Manly mob will be hunting another win but the resurgent Bulldogs will have other ideas. For all that the big ticket shows this week are Russ Crowes Rabbits v what his names Roosters and the Cam Smith Storm v The Valentine-Holmes super Sharks..... not to mention Friday Nite at the Penrose House of Pain, Southside Home of the White Lady Burger, Mt Smart. The mighty Warriors takin it to the Newcastle Knights can we ping Ponga? You Betcha....Be there or be square!!!

TIPPING well they say the cream rises to the top and it did this week with High-Tackle topping the TipCount on 6. Everyone else eating my dust....ok I still sit bottom but it was a day in the sun. With 4 rounds to run the whistle-blower easily out front but the challenge still coming from the wily JC and terrific Tarsh The FLAVA star. A full house 8 or two with bonus points could change everything. Go you good things.



Former Warrior Ruben Wiki Shines At His Latest Physical Endeavour

By JACKSON THOMAS
Courtesy of Stuff.co.nz

KIWI RUGBY league legend Ruben Wiki continues to defy father time.

He might have hung up the boots over 10 years ago, but the now 45-year-old has kept himself in tremendous shape as the Warriors strength and conditioning coach and recently ticked another athletic milestone off the bucket list.

The rugby league stalwart has taken to bodybuilding, his six month journey to the Auckland NABBA competition reaching its oiled-up conclusion on Saturday in front of a horde of proud family and friends.

But Wiki was not just there to make up numbers, walking away with second place in the Novice Phy-

sique division at his first ever competition.

"I had so much fun and am so glad my family were there to cheer me on," he said.

"Massive gratitude to some pretty awesome people that assisted throughout the first six months. We all live bust lives and to get this far, I'm so grateful for their time."

Current Warriors' captain Roger Tuivasa-Shack and Sir Peter Leitch were among the first to congratulate Wiki on his achievement.

This Warriors Life Top 10: One Season Stints

By Will Evans

THE FOLLOWING players came to the Warriors for a good time, not a long time – this week This Warriors Life celebrates the most memorable one-season stints at the club.

THISWARRIORSLIFE.COM TOP 10 – ONE-SEASON STINTS AT THE WARRIORS

10. Grant Young (1997)

Born in Palmerston North and brought up in Wanganui, giant front-rower Young moved to the Sunshine Coast as a teenager before becoming a foundation South Queensland Crushers player in 1995. The imposing 196cm and 112kg enforcer played 33 games for the embattled Crushers to force his way into the Kiwis squad at the end of 1996, featuring in all five Tests against Papua New Guinea and Great Britain. Young signed with Super League and left the ARL-aligned Crushers for the Auckland Warriors. The 26-year-old held his Kiwis spot for the historic Anzac Test in 1997 and played in nine of the Warriors' first 11 games but fell out of favour and ultimately turned out in the club's reserve grade grand final loss. Young was shipped off to the London Broncos, spending the 1998-99 seasons in the European Super League.

9. Todd Lowrie (2013)

Hardworking back-rower Lowrie, a grand finalist with Parramatta in 2009 and Melbourne in 2012, was viewed as the perfect like-for-like replacement for retired Warriors great Micheal Luck. A veteran of 163 NRL games by the time he lobbed in Auckland, the Scone junior featured in 21 of the Warriors' 24 games in 2013 under new coach Matt Elliott but failed to capture the imagination of the club's supporters – a by-product of the expectations heaped on players who have come through the Storm system. Lowrie sought a compassionate release to return to Australia at the end of the season, hanging up the boots after a year with the Broncos and later taking on the NYC coaching role at the Knights, where he started his first-grade career.

8. Matthew Spence (2000)

Junior Kiwis rep Spence won Parramatta's Rookie of the Year award in 1995 and played 50 games across five seasons for the Eels and Western Suburbs Magpies. Wests' merger with Balmain at the end of 1999 left the underrated back-rower without a club, but he was thrown a lifeline by the Auckland Warriors. Spence played 18 games under Mark Graham in 2000, scoring three tries, but he was overlooked for a contract when management of the club changed hands at the end of the season. He eventually returned to his home Bay of Plenty region and held a number of player-coach roles in the local club competition.

7. Kevin Iro (1998)

Iro was already a bona fide modern great thanks to his deeds over the previous decade with New Zealand, Wigan, Manly and Leeds over the previous decade, and his hometown return in 1998 generated plenty of excitement. But the game-breaking centre's 16-game stint with the Warriors generally underwhelmed, aside from a blockbusting two-try performance in a late-season win over the Cowboys. More memorably, Iro scored two tries off the bench in New Zealand's unforgettable Anzac Test win over Australia at North Harbour Stadium and rounded off his Kiwis career by playing in all five post-season Tests against Australia and Great Britain. Iro linked with St Helens in 1999.

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6. Jayson Bukuya (2014)

Hard-running back-rower Bukuya was brought to the Warriors in 2014 on the back of a couple of breakout seasons at Cronulla. The Fiji international started in 13 (including eight wins) of the Warriors' first 15 games but injuries contributed to his form tapering off and he finished the year on the bench. Bukuya was released from his Warriors contract on compassionate grounds, returning to the Sharks and winning a grand final with the club in 2016. The Brisbane junior is approaching 150 NRL appearances for the Sydney outfit.

5. Quentin Pongia (1998)

West Coast and Canterbury rep Pongia broke into the New Zealand Test side in 1992 to attract the attention of Canberra. The ultra-tough prop won a grand final with the Raiders in 1994 but a succession of judiciary appearances soured his subsequent campaigns in the Australian capital. Pongia linked with his Kiwis and former Canterbury coach, Frank Endacott, at the Warriors in 1998 and played 18 games – including two as captain – but a four-week suspension for a high tackle in just his second appearance ruled him out of New Zealand's Anzac Test triumph. The 28-year-old was lured back across the Tasman by the Roosters in 1999.

4. Kieran Foran (2017)

Troubled superstar Foran's hyped arrival in Auckland gave the Warriors the entire New Zealand Test spine, but the club's 2017 campaign did not go according to plan on the field – due, in part, to the injury problems endured by Foran and halves partner Shaun Johnson. The former Manly and Parramatta linchpin's Warriors debut was delayed until Round 5, a man-of-the-match performance against the Titans, and he helped inspire five wins in his first 10 outings. But Foran's flagging form as ongoing injuries took their toll mirrored the Warriors' woeful late-season fadeout. He signed with Canterbury for family reasons but played just 12 games before a toe injury ruled him out for the rest of 2018.

3. Nathan Wood (2001)

An attacking livewire and committed defender who started his first-grade career at Balmain in 1993, diminutive utility Wood relocated to Auckland in 2001 after 78 games for the Roosters. Wood proved a fine acquisition for the emerging Warriors, playing primarily as an interchange but also enjoying a three-week stint at five-eighth during the first half of the season – including a key role in their famous comeback against the Bulldogs in Wellington. Despite tipping the scales at a mere 90 kilos, Wood was also used as a starting second-rower by coach Daniel Anderson in the side's final-round loss to North Queensland. He came off the bench in the Warriors' maiden palyoffs match – a 56-12 loss to Parramatta – his 17th top-grade outing of the '01 season. The popular larrikin played out his career with English clubs Wakefield Trinity and Warrington.

2. Stacey Jones (2009)

New Zealand Team of the Century halfback Jones, widely regarded as the Warriors' greatest-ever player, came out of retirement at the age of 32. 'The Little General' had a two-season stint with Catalans Dragons after finishing up at the Warriors in 2005 but spent 2008 with Auckland club side Point Chevalier Pirates. After sitting out Round 1 of the '09 campaign, Jones enjoyed a dream comeback, inspiring a 26-24 win over defending champs Manly with two late try-assists. Jones played 23 straight games for the struggling Warriors and kicked a golden point field goal to sink the Roosters, proving that while he had lost some of his trademark zip, his playmaking class and guile remained.

Continued from previous page...

1. Dean Bell (1995)

The Auckland Warriors needed a strong, respected leader to guide the club into its 1995 premiership entry and they nailed the brief by recruiting champion former Kiwis and Wigan skipper Bell. A veteran of 26 Tests from 1983-89 and a Man of Steel winner (as well as hoisting every team trophy on offer in England) under foundation Warriors coach John Monie at Wigan, Bell was an invaluable presence at centre or lock in 19 of the Warriors' 22 debut-season games. The 33-year-old was reportedly keen for another season at Ericsson Stadium but the club unwisely turned him down and he instead spent a swansong year at Leeds. Inducted into the NZRL Legends of League in 2000, Bell later had several off-field roles at the Warriors in development, recruitment and management.

THIS WARRIORS LIFE

**FRESH COVERAGE OF THE MIGHTY NEW
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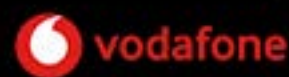
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ARL Match Reports

By ARL

Glenora's Paea Manukia on the move against Māngere East.

Rd 17 SAS Fox Memorial Premiership

Pt Chevalier 20 Mt Albert 22

A spirited comeback saw Mt Albert upset Pt Chevalier on the road, to keep their play-off hopes alive. Down 10-0 early, the Lions rallied to trail 16-12 at the break. With eight minutes left it was rookie dummy-half Aidan Aue who pulled the Lions even with a try, before Emmanuel Tuimavave-Gerrard slotted the winning conversion. Club junior Eiden Ackland earned Man of the Match honours with a strong showing in the halves.

Marist 12 Howick 24

The Marist Saints have been relegated from the first division, following a 24-12 loss on home soil against Howick. The gritty Saints trailed by just two points at the break, but couldn't stop their opponents' roll in the second. Howick captain Jethro Friend was a standout at dummy-half.

Otahuhu 34 Papakura 38

The Papakura Sea Eagles dodged any chance of being relegated, with a huge come-from-behind victory over Otahuhu. Down 30-6 at the break, Papakura charged back into the contest to even things up at 34-all with five minutes to go. With three minutes left on the clock, experienced playmaker Willie Stowers went through for an emotional match-winner, which guarantees Papakura will play in the first division next year.

Northcote 36 Richmond 12

A double from captain Taylor Daniels helped lift Northcote to a comfortable win over Richmond, which confirmed the Tigers' place in the play-offs. While they led by only eight at half-time, the Tigers hit their straps in the second stanza and the points followed.

Glenora 54 Mangere East 10

The Glenora Bears ran riot at Harold Moody Park to ensure the Roope Rooster challenge trophy remains with the club through until next season, and wrap up the Rukutai Shield minor premiership in the process. Powerhouse middle forward Paea Manukia scored two first-half tries on his way to Man of the Match honours, while fullback Polima Siaki also grabbed a double in the win.

Continued on next page...

Rd 15 Crown Lift Trucks Sharman Cup Match Reports

Ellerslie 22 Ponsonby 24

A converted try to Ofa Pulu on full-time saw Ponsonby win a thriller on Ellerslie's home turf, and guarantee themselves home field advantage for the first round of the play-offs. The Ponies held the lead right through until the final 10 minutes, when Ellerslie came from behind to take the lead, only for Pulu's last-minute try and a Carlos Mataora conversion to hand Ponsonby the win.

Franklin 22 Otara 38

A stirring second half from Otara's forward pack saw them overcome Franklin, with captain Louis Holani a standout for his side. Up 12-10 at half-time, the Storm opened the scoring in the second, but couldn't match it with the Scorpions from that point on.

Manurewa 60 New Lynn 8

Balmain Patuwai celebrated his 100th premier game for Manurewa in style, helping his side to a resounding victory over New Lynn. The Marlins ran out to an early lead and never looked back. Centre Sydnei Samiu-Latu was outstanding, scoring five tries.

Pakuranga 26 Northern 36

The Northern Brothers are through to the Crown Lift Trucks Sharman Cup play-offs, after surviving a late scare against Pakuranga, in a match where the winner was assured of advancing to the play-offs. The Jaguars had finished the stronger of the two, running in three tries in quick succession to claw back to within 10 points.

Te Atatu 30 Papatoetoe 0

Win by default.

Bay Roskill BYE

Ian and Marcia, Stacey Jones lounge members, touring Aussie. Currently in Normanton, approx 700km west of Cairns.




Look what Marcia, a member of the Stacey Jones Lounge caught. A 28ft two ton lizard.



Congratulations to Issac Luke as he plays his 250th NRL Game on Friday Night.



Thanks to Joyce for sending this in.



Coastal/ Patea Battle for Taonga in Memorial Match

By Neville Hinga

Hoodz katene taking another elusive run up the guts

A PHYSICAL DISPLAY of Masters Rugby League was shown over the previous weekend Yeah (28 July 2018).

The Patea Warriors who traveled up to Opunake played against a dominate Coastal Cobras team in an intriguing game of Masters Rugby League for the Hinga-Tapiki memorial (trophy) “Te Manawa o Poihere” Taonga that was up for grabs.

The match was played in memory of Lorna-Mary, who had close affiliations with the two Taranaki townships, the game displayed loyalty, compassion, hilarity with the players doing the mahi, getting the treats, and a couple of “Smash em bros “ and “Milking incidents” which shone throughout the event.

A fantastic spectacle it was.

With many Patea players who did not attend due to previous injuries and other commitments, Patea managed to take a strong team up to the Coast to give a them a good run for there money.

“ Yeah pretty disappointed that we couldn’t win the Taonga but congrats to the Cobras

Fair credit to Coastal who played well and took the win, it was the boys first loss of the season, you could sense the determination and dedication from the Patea players they played hard and never gave up and showed a lot of mana on the field throughout the game.” Patea's Liaison coordinator Nev Hinges stated.

Even though we (Patea) lost the game it was all about the kaupapa of the event to represent the team and do well. Not only for the club but for those who have supported the Team throughout the year.

“Having the amount of people that showed up at the Sanford Event Centre to watch the game was overwhelming to see.

“I must acknowledge and thank all the supporters from the Patea club, for there lively encouragement and loyal spectatorship.

The support the Masters team has been receiving has been phenomenal as well as those who had travelled domestically and internationally, and given up their Saturday (only Saturday we got to play a masters game as other games were scheduled Sunday games) to be there to support the kaupapa”, “nga mihi i nga koutou katoa”

It’s been greatly appreciated.

Continued on next page...

Continued from previous page...



Big thank you to the Patea Supporters for following the team throughout the season.



Coastal Cobras Mark Davis and Patea Warriors Neville Hinga representatives with Special Guest Referee Josh A from Australia to officiate the game.



Ngapari nui and Adrian Broughton 2 of the kaumatua both representing the Masters team.



Coastal Cobras and Patea Warriors playing for the Lorna Hinga Tapiki Memorial Taonga "Te Manawa o Poihere".



Two teams One rohe.

THANKS FOR THE MEMORIES SIMON MANNERING





Nice to see former players getting together from the left Ruben wiki Logan Swan and Richie Barnett All played in the NRL and of all play for the Kiwis



St. George Illawarra stalwart Jason Nightingale and kiwi international after the game with yours truly. Jason is a one club man and has played 266 games for St. George. He's also played 33 games for the kiwis. A real good bugger.

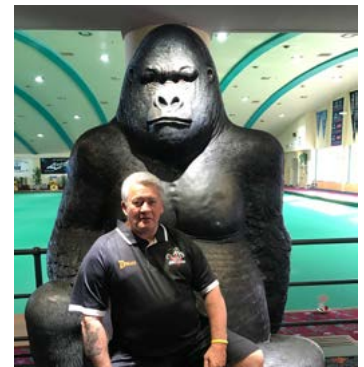
More Pictures from my Time In Aussie



We visited Bulli Meat and Seafood, a local butcher shop, owned by Troy's partner's parents.



Dining at the Dapto Rugby League club. The food was fantastic.



Teri just had to have his picture taken with this guy at the local bowling club.

Want to do a tour of Mt Smart this Friday?

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 6.30pm all welcome! This tour will be led by my good mate Dexter who flies up from Nelson just for this.



BIG LEAGUE

ON SALE EACH WEEK!

INSIDE | TEAM LISTS | STAT ATTACK | NRL FANTASY | CLUB NEWS
MITCHELL PEARCE | PETER BEATTIE Q&A | NATHAN HINDMARSH | RABBITS POSTER + MORE

BIG LEAGUE Est. 1920

YOUR OFFICIAL MAGAZINE

Adam Blair

Relishing his return to the Shaky Isles and ready to take down form

SCORE!
ONLY \$6

THE ULTIMATE NRL GUIDE

HOT SHOT

Photo by Grant Trouville/NRLphotos.com

THERE have been plenty of thrilling games in 2018, but golden point made a rare appearance this season as the Sea Eagles claimed the coastal derby spoils against Cronulla. The thrilling 33-32 win was iced by a Daly Cherry-Evans field goal and the elation for the struggling side was plain to see. Interestingly, it was the highest-scoring golden point victory since 2003, where Manly also claimed the spoils 36-34.

@NRL

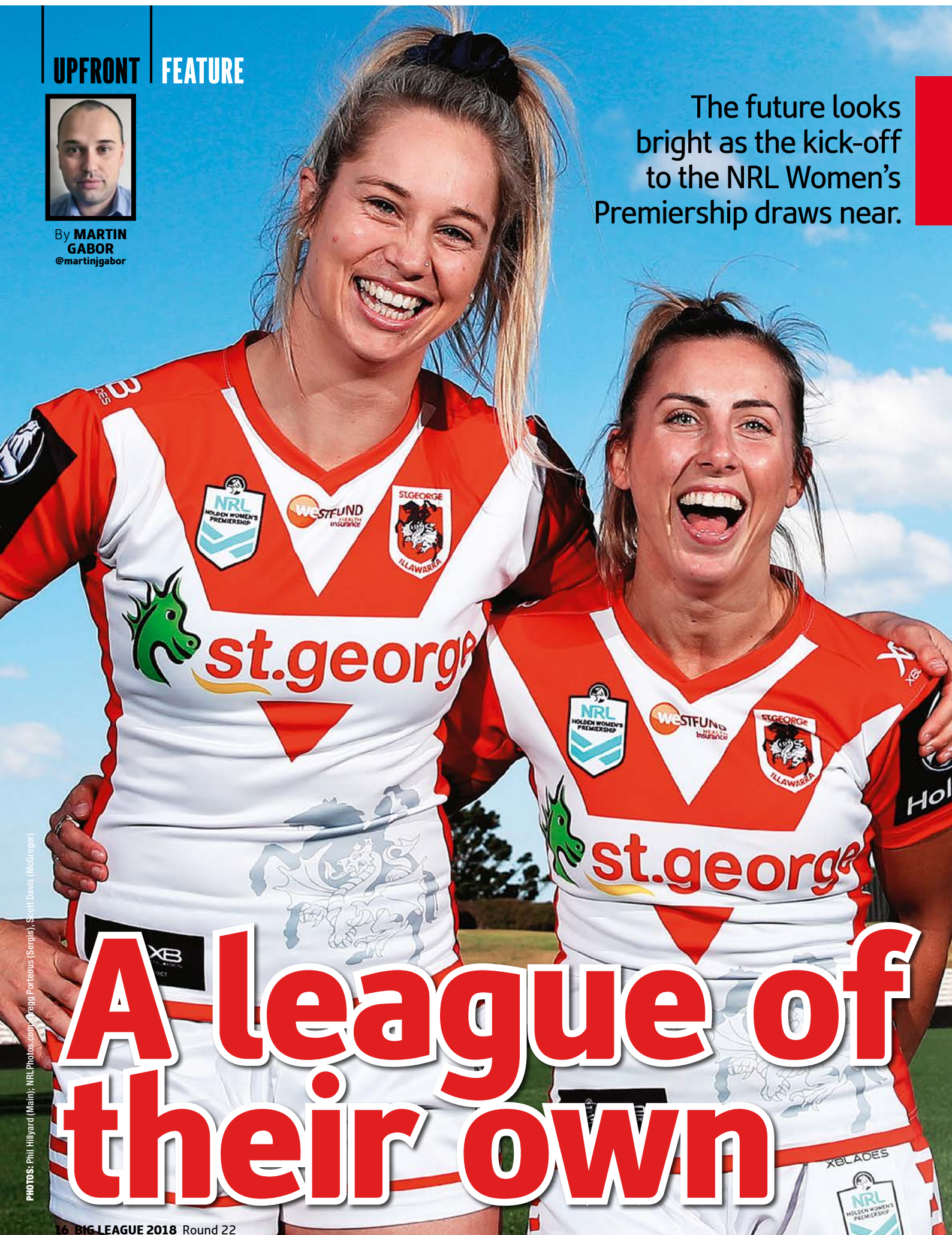


UPFRONT FEATURE



By **MARTIN GABOR**
@martinjgabor

The future looks bright as the kick-off to the NRL Women's Premiership draws near.



PHOTOS: Phil Hillyard (Main); NRL Photos.com (Gregg Porteous (Sergis), Scott Davis (McGregor))

A league of their own

16 BIG LEAGUE 2018 Round 22

THERE was a time when Jillaroos star Sam Bremner (pictured, far left) thought she was destined for a career in netball. "I never asked my parents why that was the case. I just thought boys played rugby league and the girls were meant to play netball," she tells *Big League*.

Now she's part of the rugby league revolution, with the inaugural NRL Women's Premiership set to kick off next month. Bremner's Dragons will take on the Warriors, Roosters and Broncos, with matches to be played as double-headers alongside the men's finals. It'll culminate in a decider that'll take place on NRL Grand Final day.

"Friday and Saturday nights were the best for me, Bremner recalls. "I knew I could stay up past my bedtime, I could eat pies and pizza on the lounge and watch the footy."

"That was part of our family culture, but at no point did I ever dream of one day playing in a women's competition because I didn't think that was possible."

"In terms of what we've seen over the past few years, this is the biggest step for the women's game," she adds. "We're going to see so many more girls playing and bringing their skill sets to the competition, and that's a big step for the NRL and rugby league in general."

SURGING ON

The Dragons have assembled a star-studded squad led by Bremner and Kezie Apps, and also features players who have represented Australia, New Zealand, Samoa and Tonga, as well as players who have enjoyed success in other sports.

One of the up-and-coming stars set to take the competition by storm is Jess Sergis. The youngster burst onto the scene in 2017, scoring a hat-trick for the Blues before going on to represent the Jillaroos in the history-making tour of Papua New Guinea.

What makes her meteoric rise more remarkable is that she only returned to the game last season after a lengthy break caused by a confidence-shattering tackle against the men.

"I was running down the sideline and then four boys smashed me. I was winded badly and scared, so I stopped after that and went back to netball," she explains. "I've always wanted to come back to the game. I think it was a lack of confidence that held me back because I didn't think I was up to standard."

"My family always thought I'd pursue a high level of sport. I didn't feel the pressure that I needed to impress them, but it was tough knowing that I had the ability to play and I just lacked the confidence to go for it."

"Hearing them push me, I wanted to do them proud. A little switch went off and I just had to bite the bullet and do it. I got dragged to a Cronulla-Caringbah session last year and it's rocketed off since then."

Following her success in 2017, most people expected Sergis to hit the same heights this season. Unfortunately, things haven't quite gone to plan.

"Last year was crazy. I watched the Origin game a few months ago, and I still get goosebumps remembering how happy I was that day," she beams. "Sadly, this year has been even crazier because I've only played one game of league. I've had two pretty major foot injuries."

"The first one was a ligament problem in one of the toes on my left foot, which didn't allow me to run. I returned after nine weeks and suffered a high ankle sprain in my first game back. It was heartbreaking and I've only started running recently, but getting back in time for the NRL Women's Premiership was a major goal of mine."

Sergis, who is expected to play centre for the Dragons, is



UP AND COMER:
Jess Sergis.



FERN ON FIRE:
Raecene McGregor fought hard for her Dragons contract.

full of nervous energy leading into next month's competition – but one thing you can't question is her confidence.

"I took a run against PNG last year, got smashed and lost the ball," she says.

"The old me probably would have been rattled by that. Instead, I went looking for the ball in the next set and took it up. I haven't looked back since."

OVERCOMING OBSTACLES

Next month's competition means different things for the players. For some, it's an opportunity to push for higher honours. For Talia Atfield, it's a chance to get back to what she loves doing most.

"I suffered a back injury at the start of last year and it ruled me out for almost a year," she reveals to *Big League*.

"One of the options was surgery, but I looked at the alternatives and I've been doing a program with Mick Baines at BaiMed Physio. I've gotten the all clear and have strengthened the muscles in my back. I was playing sport five nights a week and, over time, all of my muscles tightened up and weakened."

"It was hard because sport is life. I had days when I'd tell people I was fine, but then the next day I'd be really down. I surrounded myself with people who could pick me up, and thankfully I'm all good now."

The exciting half started playing in the under-7s with the Bomaderry Swamp Rats, where her dad was president. But after

winning the comp in the under-12s, she was told she had to stop playing because there were no more opportunities.

She's spent the past few years playing touch footy, soccer and basketball, but rugby league is her one true love.

"Three years ago I started playing again with Bomaderry, but I made the move to Helensburgh this year. To get this deal with the Dragons is out of this world," Atfield says.

"When young girls are asked what they want to be when they're older, they can now say that they want to be footy players. That's something we could never dream of and it's amazing that it's now possible."

NEVER GIVING UP

Dealing with adversity is nothing new for footy players. A rugby sevens star in her junior years, new Dragon Raecene McGregor caught the eye of the rugby league world by helping the Kiwi Ferns to last year's World Cup final.

She even scored a try as New Zealand were pipped by Australia at Suncorp Stadium – but her international debut was hardly a walk in the park.

"Getting there was a bit of a struggle," she says. "We had a training squad here in Australia and they picked four girls to go over to New Zealand for a trial, but unfortunately I wasn't one because they already had their halves."

It was the news no player wants to hear, but McGregor wasn't ready to give up on her World Cup dream.

"The coach who was here said if I wanted to pay for my flights to go over then I should because he thought I had a shot," she continues.

"I listened to his advice and flew over, but unfortunately I got stretched off and taken to hospital. One of the girls tackled me and landed on my neck."

"It was pretty scary because I could feel my legs, but everyone else was panicking, so I started to get nervous. I was freaking out and just couldn't believe this was happening to me, but thankfully it wasn't too serious."

"I thought I'd blown my chance, but I received a call from the coach saying that I'd played really well and that he'd love me to come back for another trial. They said they'd reimburse me for my flights and accommodation, so from there, I'd fly there and back every weekend."

Perseverance paid off for the young half, and she has since played a starring role for Cabramatta in the NSW Women's Premiership. She's even had offers to play elsewhere, but McGregor couldn't leave Sydney.

"I got offered a deal by the Warriors. The coach was the Kiwi Ferns trainer, but I explained to her that I'd rather play for a Sydney team if possible, and she understood because my job and family are here," she says.

"She even said that if things didn't work out here, then there would always be a deal waiting for me in New Zealand. I would have loved to have played for them, but my heart is in Sydney."

"I never thought this was going to come so soon. The World Cup was great, but I thought we were at least another 10 years away from having a competition like this."

Mum's The Word

UPFRONT | FEATURE



In an NRL first, mother and son Lorina and Isaiah Papali'i will both line up for their respective Warriors teams come September. By **WILL EVANS**

ALL going to plan, in a month's time Isaiah Papali'i will play in the Warriors' first finals match in seven years – and his mum Lorina will feature in the club's historic NRL Women's Premiership opener on the same weekend.

It's just one of myriad feel-good stories to emerge in the lead-up to the inaugural women's NRL competition, but this unique mother-son narrative ranks as one of the most remarkable.

As 19-year-old Isaiah prepared for his first full season in the NRL, 41-year-old Lorina made the snap decision to set her sights on making the Warriors women's team – eight years after her last game of rugby league.

A 1995 Kiwi Ferns original who was part of World Cup-winning squads in 2000 and 2005, Lorina gained provincial selection and helped Richmond Roses to an Auckland grand final before securing a contract in the Warriors' 22-strong squad.

"It's a great opportunity, I feel very privileged and honoured to represent the first Warriors NRL women's team," she tells *Big League*. "I never thought this would come to New Zealand, so that's why I jumped in – it's now or never.

"I didn't expect it but I'm definitely embracing it and I'm really excited that it's here, because it's good for women's league," she adds. "We've got a great team but we're looking forward to the battle – because that's what it'll be to prove ourselves."

Isaiah still lives at home with his mum and the pair share a tight bond. Inspired by Isaiah's stunning NRL ascent, Lorina said making her son proud was the driving force behind her unlikely comeback.

"I don't look forward to the day he leaves – we love having him at home, it's fantastic. We missed him when the Warriors stayed over in Australia," Lorina says of the games when the team face the Titans and the Dragons recently. "When I'm having a hard session or recovery, I think of Isaiah and it picks me up and gets me going again.

"He's definitely one of my biggest motivations," she adds.

Lorina's hardly been idle since hanging up the boots, involving herself heavily in CrossFit – but she admits that the rigours of rugby league training have been difficult readjusting to.

"It's been hard work – I actually felt like I'd been hit by a bus the first month," she says. "It's taken the season to rebuild and be at this point in the game, but I'm feeling good now.

"[Warriors coach] Luisa [Avaiki] wants me to be able to play an 80-minute game if put to the task, so I'm to be a leader in the forward pack, be consistent and keep it tidy. Cart the ball forward and be solid in defence."

KICKING GOALS

Kiwi Ferns legend Avaiki had no doubts her long-time club, provincial and national teammate would make it back to the elite level despite a lengthy absence from the game.

"Lorina's the ultimate competitor – she's always been like that," Avaiki tells *Big League*. "It didn't surprise me because I know her character. When she said she had a goal, it was just a matter of sitting back and watching her go and do it.

"She's still strong, she's still got her work ethic – it was just a matter of getting her conditioning back."

Only five members of the Warriors' squad are yet to represent New Zealand at Test level, but several of the Kiwi Ferns' big guns were snapped up by Brisbane and St George Illawarra. Because of this, Avaiki will be relying on veterans like Papali'i, Sarina Clark, Laura Mariu and Krystal Rota to lead the younger players through tough times in September.

"This is another competition and another level up, which means it comes with elevated pressure that some of our young girls won't have experienced," the three-time World Cup-winning captain says. "Lorina still has that mentality – cool and calm under pressure, when you just need to get a job done.

"We've got a few other experienced girls in our squad, so it's really pleasing to have those sorts of players mixed in with our young girls. They will all complement each other."

FAMILY PRIDE

Isaiah Papali'i was a shock selection in Stephen Kearney's first Warriors squad, making his NRL debut off the bench in the opening round of 2017 – less than six months after his 18th birthday. He finished the year with five top-grade appearances and has been a permanent fixture during the club's 2018 surge.

The hulking back-rower is averaging 10 runs, 30 tackles and 69 minutes as one of the enigmatic Warriors' most consistent performers, and is keeping club icon Simon Manneron on the bench when the squad is at full strength. But the tyro's meteoric rise has not affected his trademark unassuming nature.

"I have to drag out of him what a day at work was like or look at social media to see that he's been out and about. He's very humble and a great kid," Lorina says. "He's just so cool and he's got a good vibe about him. He knows where he wants to go and what he wants to do. And he's got an X-factor and a special gift with people – kids all the way through to adults."

The apple clearly doesn't fall far from the Papali'i family tree, and Isaiah bursts with pride about his mum's latest achievement.

"It's pretty unreal having her get into the women's NRL team," Isaiah tells *Big League*. "She's really come to life getting back out on that footy field and you can see that she's enjoying herself.

"I'm so happy that this opportunity has come up for her and it's been a good year so far for her."

An imposing edge presence on both sides of the ball, the young Papali'i's raw strength can be at least partially credited to his parents opening a CrossFit-focused gym in Auckland. He won two junior gold medals at the 2014 Oceania Powerlifting Championships.

Papali'i then represented the Junior Kiwis and starred in Mount Albert Grammar's national championship-winning First XV in 2016, but the Warriors beat rugby union scouts to the punch to secure the top prospect's services until the end of 2019.

"The Warriors have given me a massive opportunity and I'm happy I took it. It's worked out pretty good so far," he says. "Every week's a new challenge, but I've been enjoying it and I'm learning a lot. I'm just trying to play the best footy I can and each week helps me become a better player."

Isaiah was one of five Warriors selected for Toa Samoa in May, making his senior international debut in a spirited 38-22 loss to Tonga. The call-up carried on another family tradition – after her decade-long tenure for the Kiwi Ferns, Lorina represented Samoa in two rugby union World Cups.

"It was pretty unexpected to be honest, but given the opportunity I couldn't say no," he says. "Standing out on that field singing the national anthem was pretty crazy. It will always be a memory to cherish."

The young forward now shapes as a front-line contender to tour England and France with the Kiwis at the end of the year, likely marking the start of a long Test career in the black-and-white jumper. Just like Mum.

300
FIRST GRADE
GAMES

Brisbane Broncos
(2003-present)

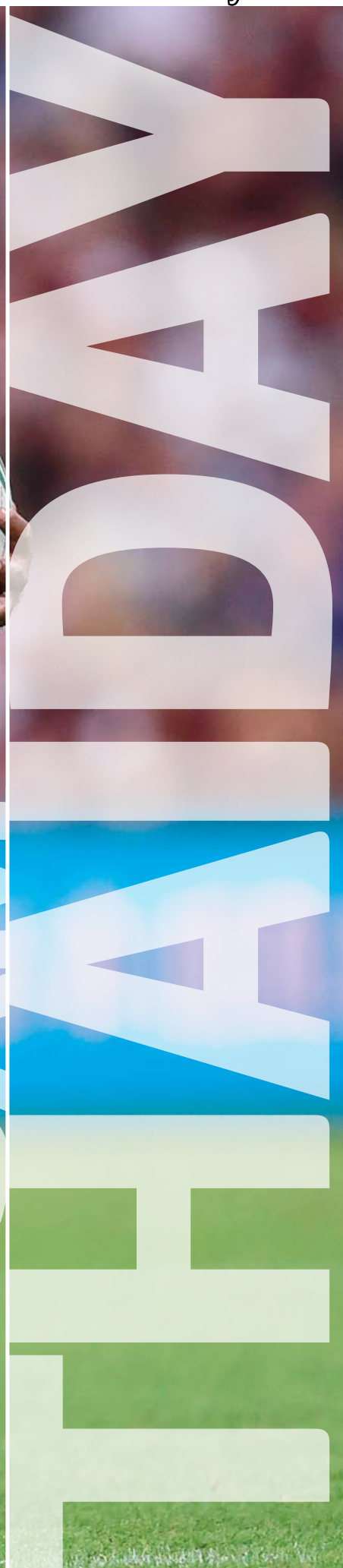
29 games for
Queensland

34 Tests for
Australia

1 Premiership

PHOTO: Scott Davis/NRL Photos.com

BIG LEAGUE





Great to catch up with my mates from the west coast in the South Island who flew over to the game. From the back Mike Keating, ex kiwi John Hobbs (1973 NZ player of the year), me, Paul McBride (a legend in Greymouth), Don Monk (played 60 games for the West coast), Wayne Smith and Paddy Byrne (former top referee and West Coast Rugby League Development Officer).

SCORE CENTRAL

» THE RESULTS

Bulldogs 32	Eels 28
Broncos 22	Titans 12
Tigers 25	Roosters 26
Knights 16	Cowboys 20
Rabbitohs 30	Sea Eagles 33
Storm 20	Sharks 32
Warriors 18	Panthers 40
Dragons 12	Raiders 31

» 2018 TELSTRA PREMIERSHIP

	W	L	D	B	PF	PA	PTS	PD
SOUTH SYDNEY	15	5	0	1	487	347	32	140
MELBOURNE	14	6	0	1	476	312	30	164
SYD ROOSTERS	14	6	0	1	460	301	30	159
ST GEORGE	13	7	0	1	471	370	28	101
PENRITH	13	7	0	1	450	373	28	77
CRONULLA	12	8	0	1	406	363	26	43
BRISBANE	12	8	0	1	418	424	26	-6
WARRIORS	12	8	0	1	370	384	26	-14
WEST TIGERS	10	10	0	1	313	349	22	-36
CANBERRA	8	12	0	1	489	474	18	15
NEWCASTLE	8	12	0	1	364	513	18	-149
GOLD COAST	7	13	0	1	380	491	16	-111
CANTERBURY	6	14	0	1	339	400	14	-61
MANLY	6	14	0	1	412	504	14	-92
NORTH QLD	5	15	0	1	325	431	12	-106
PARRAMATTA	5	15	0	1	314	438	12	-124

» TOP POINTSCORERS

	T	G	FG	PTS
G Widdop (STI)	4	87	1	191
L Mitchell (SYD)	12	69	0	186
J Isaako (BRI)	9	67	1	171
C Smith (MEL)	1	79	1	163
J Croker (CNR)	7	63	0	154
A Reynolds (SOU)	2	68	1	145
C Townsend (CRO)	2	62	2	134
M Gordon (GLD)	4	58	0	132
D Cherry-Evans (MAN)	6	53	2	132

» TOP TRYSCORERS

V Holmes (CRO)	18	D Fusitua (WAR)	15
J Addo-Carr (MEL)	17	B Ferguson (SYD)	14
R Jennings (SOU)	17	A Don (GLD)	13

» CROWDS

Canterbury v Brisbane at ANZ Stadium	6434
Newcastle v Wests Tigers at McDonald Jones Stadium	18,561
South Sydney v Melbourne at ANZ Stadium	15,132
St George Illawarra v Warriors at WIN Stadium	13,924
Parramatta v Gold Coast Titans at ANZ Stadium	6158
Sydney Roosters v North Queensland at Allianz Stadium	9721
Cronulla v Manly at Southern Cross Group Stadium	13,273
Penrith v Canberra at Panthers Stadium	12,195

» ROUND 22 GAMES

THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SUNDAY
Cowboys v Broncos at 1300SMILES Stadium, 7.50pm	Warriors v Knights at Mt Smart Stadium, 6pm	Raiders v Tigers at GIO Stadium, 2pm
Super Stadium, 3pm	Sea Eagles v Bulldogs at Lottoland, 5.30pm	Storm v Sharks at AAMI

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Daily Telegraph Sydney

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