

VODAFONE



# Sir Peter Leitch Club

AT MT SMART STADIUM, HOME OF THE MIGHTY VODAFONE WARRIORS

31<sup>st</sup> October 2018

# Newsletter #242



## Kiwis v England



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

# Message from NZRL CEO Greg Peters

**I**T'S AN honour to be asked by Sir Peter to contribute to the newsletter because I have appreciated his support since joining the NZRL about four months ago.

I took this role because I believe league can return to the heights it used to enjoy and can make a difference to the communities where it is played in a way no other sport can.

Last year was a very tough year for Rugby League but we now have a massive opportunity to turn that around and get the game back on a positive footing.

We still face significant financial challenges and a big part of my job in the first few months has been working through them, because to succeed we have to drive more revenue back to the grassroots so there is enough "milk for the cream to rise to the top" for our Kiwi teams.

And we haven't really had a great story to tell because of our limited international calendar, and more importantly, because we do not have a strategic plan that has been accepted by the game's stakeholders.

I couldn't be more pleased that we have been able to make progress on both fronts lately, including at our "Conference of League", with 80 people from across the game, our funding partners and other stakeholders.

The energy was encouraging and the enthusiasm to drive forward together is there. The conference was just the start of a process to develop a plan everyone can understand and we'll keep going by using work groups to develop more ideas including refreshing our purpose, improving what we offer for players, fans and partners, building new partnerships, helping the delivery of the game at a grassroots level, and how to better link with the community game more.

In the meantime the spotlight has well and truly on league in New Zealand with the Trans-Tasman Triple-Header in Auckland - a first for New Zealand, and the first time since 2012 the Kiwis have played Australia in Auckland.

All three teams represented us with pride. The Junior Kiwis played a team stacked with NRL first grade players and showed real character. The Kiwi Ferns almost took their game after coming back from 12-0

early, and the Kiwis game was the icing on the cake.

It is a great start in New Zealand for Michael Maguire's team, and now we need to continue on that with a series win in England.

We would have liked more people at the Triple Header but we couldn't expect that after 2017, and our first job was to back the hearts and minds of our fans. Hopefully we have gone some way to doing that.

The Kangaroos v Tonga match was something else, an amazing spectacle that showcased how good the international game can be with fan support other countries can only dream of.

It was interesting that 60 per cent of the Tongan team came through NZRL pathways and that demonstrates the wider responsibility we have to grow the game in New Zealand. Of course we want the Kiwis and Kiwi Ferns to be No 1, so our challenge is to create an environment where we are first choice while respecting the growth of the game in the Pacific.

And there's been a lot of progress on our international calendar with Tonga (22 June) and Australia (October) locked in, and with RLIF and the Asia Pacific Rugby League Confederation, we are looking at a new Oceania Cup.

There's also a potential Lions tour next year, subject to it stacking up commercially. We are also well advanced on 2020 matches and the lead-up to RLWC in 2021, which all means, apart from the chance for our teams to be playing in New Zealand in front of their families and fans, we have something to sell to commercial partners, which is critical for our growth.

Confession time, I actually wrote this while flying to the UK to support the Kiwis and to attend important RLIF meetings to advance the test calendar and other international matters.

We have much to do but I'm convinced that if we are all aligned and working together, the power of league will win through. Thank you for your ongoing passion and support!

GO THE KIWIS

# The Great Debate

By David Kemeys

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



**S**O THE Kiwis lost to a late try and copped some unusual treatment from the man with the whistle but there is really only one league story on the go at the moment, and it is one that must piss Shaun Johnson off immensely.

Every man and his dog has had a go at him.

The club we love has apparently told Shaun to test his value on the open market, as clear a signal as it is possible to get that his days at Mt Smart are numbered.

The detractors, and the poor man has had more than his fair share of them, are loving it, asking why it is taken this long, pointing out his deficiencies, - which they claim are many and varied – and generally not holding back on putting the boot in.

He is either a flawed genius who cannot put in consistent performances, or to his supporters, still the best thing about the club.

Some things just can't be disputed. Shaun is our marquee player, paid who really knows what, but the "million dollar man" tag has never sat comfortably on his shoulders.

But in not one report have I seen anything that has not been said before.

Most of it was wrong then, and it is now.

Yes he can have ordinary games, but he has also shown enormous courage to come back from crushing injury, though many say he's never been the same, he has won games for us that we never should have been in, and he remains one of the few we have with genuine match-turning capability.

The dumbest of the claims has been that he is turnstile in defence, when in fact he has improved immeasurably in that area.

At his best, flying into the line, stepping like he's running on hot coals, and leaving defenders in his wake, he can be magnificent –and he frequently has been.

There have been other criticisms - that's he's not tough enough, which is a very easy claim to make from the comfort and safety of your keyboard – and even that he lacks heart, which is just plain offensive.

There's also the claim that if he was going to deliver the championship we crave, he would have done it by now, which to my mind rather let's some pretty ordinary sides of carrying any of the responsibility for our dismal seasons of the past.

What can't be argued is that it does send a signal that no one has a right to play, no matter the number of zeroes on the paycheck, and that the club now demands results.

Better minds than mine, which is to say pretty-much everyone else, can argue the pros and cons, what turns my stomach it the level of hatred aimed at him, especially when he is still one of ours.

I will continue to be a fan until he signs a deal with another club, at which point I will claim he is a turncoat, we are better off rid of him, that he is past it, good riddance and all the rest of it.

Until then, he is one of mine.

Some others things are also undoubtedly true.

*Continued on next page...*

*Continued from previous page...*

He has had to carry expectations that even Cmeron Smith would have struggled with. He has played in sides that we all know were not up to it. He has also been lambasted for being a pretty-boy, which is a criticism that is never going to be levelled at me. For goodness sake he can't be blamed for being a good-looking chap surely.

No one ever claimed Kevin Campion was a good player because he had a face only a mother could love, a claim I'm happy to make knowing Campo is on the other side of the Tasman.

But the good of the club has to come first, and that is a decision that has to be trusted to those in management.

I will say this though. There will be clubs licking their lips at the prospect of having him, especially though that rely on forward dominance. The Roosters spring to mind. Imagine Shaun behind that pack, and feeding a backline of that quality too.

One thing that does worry me though is what happens now? It's hard to see a club with loads of cash ready to take him now, though the Sharks managed it with Aaron Wood while claiming they did not breach the cap this season, so what head space is he going to be in knowing he is turning out for a club that has basically signalled it does not want him?

And if not Johnson, then who?

There don't appear to be too many better on the mar-

1 Saturday, March 16 v Bulldogs, Mt Smart  
2 Sunday, March 24 v Tigers, Campbelltown  
3 Saturday, March 30 v Manly, Christchurch  
4 Friday, April 5 v Titans, Mt Smart  
5 Saturday, April 13 v Rabbitohs, Central Coast  
6 Saturday, April 20 v Cowboys, Mt Smart  
7 Thursday, April 25 v Storm, Melbourne  
8 Sunday, May 5 v Knights, Mt Smart  
9 Saturday May 11 v Dragons, Suncorp  
10 Friday, May 17 v Panthers, Penrith  
11 Saturday, May 25 v Broncos, Mt Smart  
12 Bye  
13 Saturday, June 8 v Storm, Mt Smart  
14 Friday, June 14 v Titans, Gold Coast  
15 Sunday, June 30 v Panthers, Mt Smart  
16 Saturday, July 6 v Knights, Newcastle

ket, and we all know attracting players to this side of the Tasman has not been our strong suit.

### **Draw Does Us No Favours**

The NRL draw has been confirmed, and we get two games against five of last year's play-off teams during the 25-round season.

We have the Storm, Rabbitohs, Sharks, Panthers and Broncos twice, but the Dragons and Roosters only once – and both of them are in Aussie to boot.

The game against the Dragons is actually a home game during the NRL's 'Magic Round' on May 11 in Brisbane, which I have already said I think is a dumb idea.

That leaves us with the Bulldogs, Tigers, Queensland Cowboys and Eels as once only too.

On the other hand we could have copped a worse start that is for sure, with five of our first six against teams who missed out on the finals last season - four in New Zealand.

That does mean of course that your finish is harder, with three of which are away games.

We play two games outside Auckland, Christchurch v Manly in Round Three, and the Sharks in Wellington on July 19.

We get our annual Anzac Day flogging against Melbourne in Round Seven on April 25.

If our care, that is 12 Saturday games, seven Friday nights, four Sundays and one on Thursday night.

### **2019 DRAW**

17 Saturday, July 13 v Broncos, Suncorp  
18 Friday, July 19 v Cronulla Sharks, Wellington  
19 Saturday, July 27 v Eels, Western Sydney  
20 Friday, August 2 v Raiders, Mt Smart  
21 Friday, August 9 v Manly, Mt Smart  
22 Sunday, August 18 v Roosters, TBC  
23 Saturday, August 24 v Sharks, Shark Park  
24 Friday, August 30 v Rabbitohs, Mt Smart  
25 Saturday, September 7 v Raiders, Canberra.





By Barry Ross  
Australian Correspondent

# Coach Maguire

New Zealand Kiwis coach Michael Maguire at the Kiwis Captains run.  
Photo [www.photosport.nz](http://www.photosport.nz)

**N**EW ZEALAND can still win the series against England if coach Michael Maguire bases his game plan around his backs in the remaining two Tests. In the first Test at Hull on Saturday, Shaun Johnson and Kodi Nikorima dominated the first half but failed to make much of an impact in the second 40 minutes. New Zealand forwards also had the better of the first half but the English six came back in the second stanza. While the Kiwis do have some talented forwards in their pack, it is the speed and skill of Nikorima and Johnson which will create try scoring situations in the remaining two Tests. This duo will be better for their outing at Hull and can inspire their team to a win at Anfield this Saturday. While you cant blame the match officials for the first Test loss, the home team certainly had the better of the fifty-fifty calls. On the BBC Sport website English coach, Wayne Bennett was quoted as saying after the game, " we had the luck today. " Two big calls from video ref, Ben Tailer, went England's way. The English official was quick to rule no try for Jordan Rapana in the 14th minute, saying he knocked the ball on before forcing it. To me this wasn't so clear cut on the replay and as the on field referee, Robert Hicks had said a try, this should have been the decision. Thailer was just as quick to decide on the penalty try to England just before half time. While it may have been an accident, New Zealand captain Dallin Watene-Zelezniak did slide into the English player over the tryline knees first. But I dont believe the knees made contact with Jake Connor's head. I also dont think the Kiwi captain's actions had any bearing on stopping Connor getting the ball down for a try. The other Kiwi defenders had done that and that was clearly shown in the replay A penalty try should only be awarded if in the opinion of the referee he was absolutely certain a try would have been scored but for the actions of Dallin. But in saying all this, the Test was there to be won by New Zealand and they did not do this. The first Test was an entertaining affair but the crowd of 17,649 would have been a disappointment to the local Rugby League men.

And so to Anfield, the home of Liverpool Football Club, this coming Saturday. The game will be the second time a Rugby League Test match will be played at the venue. On 20 November 2016, Australia beat New Zealand 34-8 in the Four Nations final. On 27 April 1997, St Helens beat Castleford 42-16 in a Super League clash at Anfield, while on 2 October 1991, Wigan beat Penrith 21-4 in a World Club Championship game at the ground. Back in the 1930s, there was a semi professional Rugby League team located in the city, named Liverpool Stanley. They were named after their home ground which was the Stanley Greyhound Stadium at Kensington, an inner city suburb of Liverpool, known as Kenny. Apart from a few seasons during World War Two, this club existed from 1934 to 1950 and from 1951 to 1968, it was renamed Liverpool City, which played their home games at the Knotty Ash ground. Before 1934 and after 1968, there have been several different names for this club and also a few different locations such as at Huyton and Runcorn. Billy Belshaw, a fullback/centre, who played in all three Tests for the series winning 1936 Great Britain team to Australia and New Zealand, won selection in the touring team from the Liverpool Stanley club. The 1956 Kangaroos to England opened their tour with a 40-12 against Liverpool City at the Knotty Ash ground on 10 October 1956.

*Continued on next page...*

*Continued from previous page...*

The Rugby League European Championships are being held in England during the New Zealand tour. These matches are doubling up as World Cup qualification fixtures and on Saturday, France beat Wales 54-18 at Carcassonne, while Ireland defeated Scotland 36-10 at Dublin. The Welsh captain against France on Saturday was Elliot Kear and he attended the Whitchurch High School in Cardiff. There are many sporting superstars who are also old boys of this school and these include Real Madrid and Wales soccer captain, Gareth Bale, Sam Warburton, who has captained Wales in 49 Rugby Tests and also the British and Irish Lions, plus former Tour de France winner, Geraint Thomas. Elliot Kear, 30 years of age, was in the same year as Warburton and Bale at Whitchurch and currently plays with the London Broncos (Skolars).

The coaching merry-go-round in the NRL is not a good look for our sport. Wayne Bennett has signed a two year deal with Souths for 2020 and 2021, but will he or wont he be at the club next year. Who knows? And Kiwi coach Michael Maguire is now officially the coach of the Wests Tigers for 2019, while Ivan Cleary will move back to Penrith next year and take over the Panthers, where his son is a key player. And what about Manly? Will Trent Barrett and Des Hasler ride a tandem bike? That wont happen but there will be plenty of movement at the Manly station over the next few weeks.

The South African cricket team open their short Australian tour with a match today (Wednesday 31 October) against a Prime Minister's XI in Canberra. They also play three 50 over ODIs at Perth, Adelaide and Hobart and finish with a Twenty/20 clash against Australia on the Gold Coast on 17 November. After this, India begins a three Twenty/20, four Tests and three ODIs tour from 21 November to 18 January 2019, while Sri Lanka then play two Tests at Brisbane and Canberra from 24 January to 5 February 2019.

---

## **Good luck to the Kiwis and Michael Maguire for their second test against England.**

Don't forget to tune in Monday morning 3:30 AM to watch the second test between the Kiwis and England on Sky Sport 2.



**GET BEHIND  
YOUR KIWIS  
THIS MONDAY**



**NEW ZEALAND  
KIWIS™**



By John Coffey

## Dallin The Diplomat

Englands George Burgess tackles New Zealands Dallin Watene-Zelezniak  
Photo [www.photosport.nz](http://www.photosport.nz)

**D**ALLIN WATENE-ZELEZNIAK'S great grandfather Steve Watene not only preceded him as captain of the Kiwis but also went on to become a highly respected Member of Parliament. Now it seems that DWZ has not only inherited Steve's leadership skills but also his diplomatic manner in not exploding into the post-match interviewer's microphone when asked about his concession of a ridiculous penalty try at Hull last weekend.

The six points gifted to England by video referee Ben Thaler – again proving himself to be one of the most patriotic Englishmen of all time – made all the difference in lifting the home side from a 6-12 deficit on the call of halftime and in the final winning scoreline of 18-16. What Thaler accomplished in his big moment was complemented by on-field England referee Richard Hicks with his 9-5 penalty count against the Kiwis.

Another Kiwis team has fallen for the Rugby Football League's "generous" offer to host the cash-strapped New Zealand Rugby League for a three-Test series. Three years ago the Kiwis lost the first and third Tests in England, both refereed by Thaler. It was no coincidence the Kiwis won the second Test under Australian official Gerard Sutton. I am no Sutton fan but Thaler is the best argument I know for demanding neutral referees.

Hicks awarded the penalty try after DWZ slid on his knees to assist Shaun Johnson prevent England centre Jake Connor from forcing the ball. DWZ's arrival had nothing to do with keeping the ball off the try-line; Johnson had already achieved that. It was the most ridiculous penalty try in international rugby league since the French were allowed to bring their own referee, Marcel Chanfreau, to New Zealand in 1995.

On that occasion a French player kicked ahead 25 metres from the Kiwis goal-line and was tackled marginally late by fullback Matthew Ridge. Although the ball rolled over the sideline well out of reach of any player, Chanfreau dashed over to the posts and signalled a penalty try. He later ruled a forward pass when Gene Ngamu sent Gary Freeman clear for what would have been the winning try. That match was drawn 16-16.

At Hull, Hicks took over from where Thaler left off. He gave England two points despite forward Elliott Whitehead clearly losing the ball in a tackle without it being stripped. That made it 14-14. After Oliver Gildart's 67th minute try put England in front, the home team received a string of relieving penalties. On one occasion Sam Tomkins pushed Johnson into a play-the-ball, looked over to Hicks and was given a penalty.

This was not the story published in England, where the media lauded debutant Gildart for his try after John Bateman had attracted the entire Kiwis left-side defence. Gildart, a late addition to Wayne Bennett's squad after Sam Burgess withdrew, took his chance expertly, swerving inside DWZ in a 60-metres run he will always cherish. The England defence was also highly praised for keeping the Kiwis try-less in the second spell.

*Continued on next page...*

Continued from previous page...

So Frank Endacott and Quentin Pongia remain as the only coach and captain, respectively, to lead a New Zealand team through an unbeaten series in Britain – in 1998 the Kiwis won the first two Tests but still shake their heads at how seven points were conceded in the last three minutes of the third Test to end with a 23-23 draw. Now DWZ and coach Michael Maguire must win at Liverpool and Leeds to rescue this series.

Although referee Hicks was as protective of England's narrow points advantage over the closing stages as the determined England players, the Kiwis should be kicking themselves over the manner in which Gildart was let loose. Their most costly defensive error occurred when everything was at stake. England's other scores came, firstly, from a kick and a few Hail Mary passes, and, secondly, that notorious penalty try.

England clearly has not suffered too much from the loss of Sam Burgess and prolific scorer Ryan Hall. Had Burgess been available Gildart would have been with the England A team in Papua New Guinea, while St Helens forward Luke Thompson – who was one of England's very best --would not have made the Test 17. The elusive Tommy Makinson was a more than adequate substitute for Hall on the left wing.

The Kiwis were, in the words of former Wales and Great Britain half Jonathan Davies, "a slightly better side but England kept them out". But they disappointed with their attacking options. Maybe a stunning triumph over the Kangaroos in Auckland and a stopover in the Dubai heat is not the ideal preparation for coming up against England on a freezing, windy day and a soggy pitch in north-east Yorkshire.

Joseph Manu and Jordan Rapana were unemployed on their flank, Jared Waerea-Hargreaves sailed too close to the wind again – Hicks did not need invitations to issue penalties – and the expected impact from the bench was muted. The late withdrawal of Adam Blair because of a training knee injury might have upset the rotation, with Joseph Tapine, who had not played since August, making only a token appearance.

Scorers: England 18 (Sam Tomkins, Oliver Gildart tries; penalty try; Jake Connor three goals) beat New Zealand 16 (Esan Marsters, Dallin Watene-Zelezniak tries; Shaun Johnson four goals). Halftime, 12-12. Man of the match, Elliott Whitehead (England). Referee, Robert Hicks (England). Penalty count, England 9-5. Crowd, 17,649.

---

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



Facebook



Instagram



Twitter

**Good luck to the All Blacks  
playing Japan this  
Saturday. Catch it live on  
Sky from 6PM**







Shaun Johnson on the move.  
Photo [www.photosport.nz](http://www.photosport.nz)



By Miles Davis

## First Test

**U**NDERSTANDABLY FANS of the Kiwis are disappointed by the result of the first test against England at the weekend but if I were them I wouldn't get too down about it.

First thing to consider is the lead-up to the game. Now in an ideal world one would like one's players to be able to front up on any occasion they pull on the Kiwi jersey but I believe there are several mitigating factors to be considered here. There surely can be no doubt that the Australian test would have taken a huge physical and emotional toll on the team. An upset victory that was so close to being snatched at the death.

Then the team has to fly to the other side of the world and, without a warm-up game to acclimatise, take on the World Cup finalists on their own patch. Also factor in that England had a relatively gentle warm-up game against France and that no Kiwi side has won a series in that part of the world for 20 years.

The game itself had several aspects that did not help the Kiwis. Some they brought on themselves and others inflicted by the match officials and the opposition. The Kiwis option-taking on the 5th tackle was poor as was their kicking game. I am sure this will be worked and we can expect a vast improvement in the next test. The penalty-try also did not help. Although in the strictest sense one could justify the decision there is a school of thought that Jake Connor was held up by Shaun Johnson anyway and that Dallin Watene-Zelezniak's intervention had no effect on the incident.

Then of course there was the one real moment of brilliance from the England side as John Bateman off-loaded to Oliver Gildart who out-stepped the Kiwi defence to score a memorable try.

I love these series' and have followed them closely for 40 years and as a proud Englishman (I support the Kiwis when they play anyone else but never the Motherland) I can tell you that I am nervous about the 2nd test. I couldn't help feeling during the first encounter that the Kiwis have more match-winners than the Poms. Even in the loss they showed more potential to open up the opposition defence. That's not to say England won't pose a serious threat themselves with the likes of Jermaine McGillvary and Tom Makinson but I just got the impression that with a match under their belt the Kiwis may well have the extra edge. I sincerely hope that I am wrong.

Finally I want to once again ask people to get off Shaun Johnson's back. If one listens to talkback radio or reads social media one would think that every time the Vodafone Warriors or the Kiwis lose it is Johnson's fault. It is not. He is one of 13 players out there who collectively will decide who wins the game. Johnson is high-profile because of his skill-set and is often prominent in moves that can win games. But he is certainly not the sole reason for a defeat. Why not give him a bit more moral support and encouragement when he is representing you. You might find that he will be more consistently brilliant and bring you the results you crave.

# NEW ZEALAND RUGBY LEAGUE MUSEUM

## WATCH PREVIOUS KIVI GAMES IN FULL

Check out our catalogue of games.

## HISTORY OF RUGBY LEAGUE IN NZ

Player information, Roll of Honour & Legends of League.

## MEET THE KIWIS

Interviews like you've never seen before with Kiwi league stars.

## PLAYER MEMORABILIA

Trophies, medals, photos & much more!



**VISIT:** League House, 7 Beasley Avenue,  
Auckland, NZ (Right next door to Mt Smart Stadium)

**PHONE:** 09 525 5592

**EMAIL:** [museum@nzrl.co.nz](mailto:museum@nzrl.co.nz)

**THE RUGBY LEAGUE  
MUSEUM SOCIETY**  
*of New Zealand*

[www.nzrlmuseum.co.nz](http://www.nzrlmuseum.co.nz)



By Shane Hurdell  
Hawke's Bay Today  
Sports Reporter

## Call For Unicorns To Return

**WHANAU AFFAIR** Whitley and Jarome Mareikura were two of three siblings from their whanau to play for Bridge Pa at the national Maori tournament. **PHOTO**HAWKE'S BAY TODAY

**T**HERE'S ENOUGH rugby league talent in Hawke's Bay to get the Unicorns rep team up and running again.

That was the call from Bridge Pa coach Ihaka Waerea after his team finished third in the waka grade at the national Maori tournament in Rotorua during Labour Weekend. Rugby League Hawke's Bay didn't field a Unicorns team this year and last year the Unicorns were walloped 86-6 by the Wellington Orcas in their only outing.

"Obviously we have to play in a winter comp to get the Unicorns underway again and we hope to use the Manawatu competition as a pathway for that," Waerea said.

He was referring to the fact RLHB's club competitions are run in the spring so they don't clash with club rugby.

"There are some of our players who still want to play club rugby but there are enough who want to focus on league in the winter," Waerea explained.

He was thrilled with how his team performed in the 19-team waka grade, the division below the six-team rohe division which is the premier grade at the tournament. They were beaten 27-16 by Te Puaha o Waikato in their semifinal.

In their pool games Bridge Pa beat Tuhoē 40-8, Northern Maori 28-10, Tairāwhiti 30-20 and Taranaki 28-16.

"We exceeded expectations and played some good footy. We've improved from our fifth place last year and eighth in 2016. There is talk suggesting we should go up to the rohe grade but we want to win the waka grade first and that will be the aim at next year's tournament in Taranaki," Waerea said.

Two of his squad, former Magpies and Manawatu Turbos rugby utility back Lewis Marshall and Samoa Sevens rep Neria Fomai, both made the waka grade tournament team after superb displays in their respective fullback and centre positions. Captain and scrumhalf Colin Hokianga and centre Jackson Waerea were other consistent performers in the Bridge Pa backline.

"We had the smallest forward pack in our grade but we were mobile and were able to move the bigger packs around and they got tired in the hot conditions. Our forwards grafted and worked hard," coach Waerea said.

Props Jesse Tuhua and Teira Cowan, secondrower Teina Huia and backrower Ivan Bellamy had huge workrates in the Bridge Pa pack. Waerea said there was also an emphasis placed on development for the future and he was pleased with the progress made by Jacob Stephenson in the centre and secondrow positions, stand-off Shamara Brooks and secondrower Damarus Hokianga.

*Continued on next page...*

*Continued from previous page...*

Brooks and Hokianga were members of the Hastings Boys' High School 1st XV rugby team this year and Stephenson played for the side last year.

The Bridge Pa women's team finished fourth in their pool and missed out on a semifinal berth in the eight-team women's open grade. They opened their campaign with a 20-4 loss to Bay of Plenty-based team Ngati Umutahi after leading 4-0 at halftime.

They then recorded two consecutive wins, 32-10 against Auckland-based Nga Hau ki Tamaki and 20-12 against Bay of Plenty-based Tuhoe, before ending their weekend with an 18-10 loss to Te Puaha o Waikato.

Former Kiwi Fern Tori Iosefo, continued her hot form from the Hawke's Bay Tui rugby side's Farah Palmer Cup campaign, and the winger was the only Bridge Pa player named in the women's tournament team. Fellow Tui team players, Lara Kendrick and former Kiwi Fern Chanel Huddleston shone in their respective wing and inside back positions.

Fullback Candis Timms and Australia-based prop Patrice Mareikura were others to impress for Bridge Pa. Mareikura was joined by her sister Whitley in the women's team and their brother Jarome played in the men's side.

---

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



Facebook



Instagram



Twitter



**Read more click here:**

**<https://www.warriors.kiwi/news/2018/10/25/the-2019-nrl-draw-is-here/>**

# Big Start To 2019 Canterbury Season

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)



**T**WO OF the biggest highlights of the 2019 Canterbury rugby league season will occur even before a ball is kicked in the local inter-club competitions. It was revealed by CEO Duane Fyfe at last Friday night's awards evening that the new Nga Puna Wai playing fields will be christened with a match between the Canterbury Bulls and the Warriors Intrust Super Premiership team on Saturday, February 23.

Nga Puna Wai (I hope the CRL has the right to give their area a name more appropriate to rugby league) is a multi-sports complex which has inevitably been running behind schedule but recently reached a milestone with the opening of the international athletics facility. Two hockey pitches are nearing completion, with twelve tennis courts and the two rugby league fields expected to follow in April.

The Christchurch City Council designed the complex to replace the earthquake ruined Queen Elizabeth II athletics stadium, Porritt Park (hockey), Wilding Park (tennis) and Rugby League Park (formerly the Addington Show Grounds and more recently AMI Stadium). Fyfe said the 460-seat Nga Puna Wai grandstand would not be finished in time for the Bulls-Warriors game, limiting the capacity to between 2500 and 3000.

"It's a good opportunity to turn our new house of rugby league into the home of rugby league in Canterbury," said Fyfe. "We know from our history at Rugby League Park that we cherish having a spiritual home and we hope that Nga Puna Wai will provide that for us again with a buy-in from everybody." The two adjacent fields will be separated by an embankment which also provides some uncovered spectator seating.

The other early 2019 highlight is the Manly Warringah Sea Eagles' home NRL match against the Warriors on Saturday, March 30. Being granted a third-round draw with a 5pm kick-off during daylight saving should ensure a full house at what is now Christchurch Stadium (AMP having withdrawn its sponsorship earlier this year). The Warriors won their first Christchurch clash 34-14 in front of a near capacity crowd last June 9.

While Queen Elizabeth II Park, Porritt Park and Wilding Park were all destroyed (along with Lancaster Park and several rugby league clubs) by the earthquakes in 2010 and 2011, Rugby League Park was rebuilt as the temporary stadium used predominantly by the Canterbury and Crusaders rugby union sides. Once the new roofed \$500 million stadium is built downtown about 2022 the old Show Grounds will be sold off by the city council.

Linwood Keas and Hornby Panthers were the big winners from the 2018 season. The male Keas won the premier grade Masetti Cup (minor premiership) and Pat Smith Challenge Trophy (grand final) double as well as the Poore Cup for the best results over all grades.

The Keas female team annexed the CRL Trophy for winning the women's grand final after being runner-up to Papanui Tigers in the round-robin.

However, Hornby was presented with the prestigious CRL Shield as Club of the Year, a tribute to its administration and fostering of the game. Hornby also produced two of the three New Zealand Residents representatives in forwards James Baxendale and Rulon Nutira, along with Linwood's Ben Italio. Sui Pauaraisa was the Canterbury women's star, playing for both the Kiwi Ferns and the Warriors NRLW team.

Riccarton Knights veteran Shane Tamatea was a highly popular recipient of the D V Syme Rosebowl as inter-club Sportsman of the Year, with Pauaraisa being awarded the women's equivalent. Volunteer of the Year was Tony Grenfell (Riccarton) and Michelle Harding (Halswell Hornets) was Administrator of the Year. Jeff Whittaker, who achieved distinction as a player, coach and administrator over many years, is now a CRL life member.

*Continued on next page...*

Continued from previous page...

The Canterbury Bulls beat Counties-Manukau and Waikato before losing to Akarana and missing the final on a count-back. Scrum-half Brad Campbell was Rookie of the Year, prop Alex Todd the Most Outstanding Player, Nutira the Players' Player and Baxendale the Sportsman of the Year. The women's award winners were Bobby Lee Ross (rookie), Cassie Siataga (most outstanding) and Pauaraisa (sportswoman).

Eight Canterbury juniors played NRL during 2018: Jamayne Isaako (Broncos, top points scorer and Dally M Rookie of the Year), Jazz Tevaga (Warriors, Dally M Interchange Player of the Year), Kodi Nikorima (Broncos), Fa'amanu Brown (Bulldogs), Lewis Brown (Sea Eagles), Pita Godinet (Tigers), Slade Griffin (Knights) and Matt McIlwrick (Tigers), with Sui Pauaraisa (Warriors) being a NRL women's pioneer.

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



Facebook



Instagram



Twitter

Get a quote  
or make a  
booking today



When the Mad Butcher goes to Waiheke Island he prefers to travel with Sealink!

## Your link to Waiheke and Great Barrier Islands

SeaLink\* ferries have been carrying vehicles, passengers and freight to Waiheke and Great Barrier Islands since 1960.

We welcome foot passengers, or take your car for an island road trip.

For your freight needs, enquire about our versatile SeaLink Logistics fleet.

Get in touch with our friendly team to book your travel and transportation around the Hauraki Gulf.

0800 732 546 [info@sealink.co.nz](mailto:info@sealink.co.nz) [www.sealink.co.nz](http://www.sealink.co.nz)



**SEALINK**  
*Get together*



# Auckland Club Volunteers Recognised

By Auckland Rugby League



Kandi Ngataki from the Tuakau Broncos

**D**EDICATED VOLUNTEERS across the region were acknowledged at the 2018 Auckland Rugby League Club Volunteers of the Year Luncheon, held on Sunday, October 28 at Edinburgh Castle in Auckland.

Recipients were selected by their respective clubs to receive recognition for their service throughout the 2018 season.

ARL special projects manager Selwyn Pearson said the event was special because the members were chosen by their peers.

“Our game wouldn’t be what it is without our volunteers,” Pearson said.

“For us to hold something like this gives us an opportunity to recognise the amount of time and effort our club members commit to making our game a great experience for our people.

“This year has been another great year, and we thank everyone for their contribution in 2018.”

### 2018 AUCKLAND RUGBY LEAGUE VOLUNTEERS OF THE YEAR WINNERS

- |                                 |                             |                               |
|---------------------------------|-----------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Bay Roskill   Mike Ashworth     | Mangere East   Senita Petau | Pukekohe   Sharlene Pulefolau |
| East Coast Bays   Wade Kirkland | Manukau   Charish Ngatoko   | Richmond   Joe Landon         |
| Ellerslie   Todd Price          | Manurewa   Agnes Koti       | Te Atatu   Donna Wharerau     |
| Glenfield   Annitta Cleal       | New Lynn   Joe Neilson      | Tuakau   Kandi Ngataki        |
| Glenora   Luana Kem             | Otahuhu   John Taminika     | Waiuku   Glenys Taupo         |
| Howick   Daniel Rawson          | Papatoetoe   Sally Ponting  |                               |
| Hibiscus Coast   Karen Gibbons  | Pakuranga   Rawinia Mana    |                               |



Rawinia Mana from the Pakuranga Jaguars.



Luana Kem of the Glenora Bears.



L-R - ARL CEO Greg Whaiapu, Manurewa chair Darrell Woodhouse and Otahuhu chair Bruce Shaw.



Karen Gibbons from the Hibiscus Coast club.



Ellerslie's Todd Price.



# FAST5 Ferns Win seventh Fast5 Netball World Series



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

**R**EVERSING THEIR round robin result, the FAST5 Ferns went on to clinch a seventh Fast5 Netball World Series title when shading Jamaica 34-33 in a pulsating 2018 final in Melbourne on Sunday.

Beaten by Jamaica earlier in round robin play by a similar one-goal margin, the FAST5 Ferns turned the tables in the final to confirm their status as the best exponents of the shortened version of the game when securing their seventh World Series title from nine attempts.

“This is absolutely awesome and I’m really pleased for this group of girls,” FAST5 Ferns coach Debbie Fuller said afterwards.

“Jamaica are such an athletic team and you cannot underestimate their pride, the aerial game they’ve got and their power, in terms of what they can do on the court, so we had to come out with a strategy that would choke the ball into their shooters.

“Everyone committed to that and we were able to hold it for that dying last minute which seemed to go on forever.”

Taking their power play (worth double points) in the second quarter was not as productive as the FAST5 Ferns would have liked but their ability to chip in two-point shots throughout the match, with all shooters – Ameliaranne Ekenasio, Bailey Mes, Monica Falkner and Aliyah Dunn contributing, kept the New Zealanders well in the contest.

With an imposing Jamaica, bookended by outstanding defender Shamera Sterling and towering shooter Romelda Aiken, taking their power play in the last quarter and trailing by just nine, compounded by the threat of long bomb specialist Shanice Beckford, the signs looked ominous for the FAST5 Ferns.

Potting the close shots, with excellent rebounding from Mes and Ekenasio, and a wholehearted team defensive effort, the FAST5 Ferns just kept their noses in front through a gripping final stanza.

Newcomer Karin Burger continued her excellent tournament form with a big defensive intercept with 40 seconds left to play, and the FAST5 Ferns leading by three. It proved crucial in buying extra time, the fast-finishing Jamaicans running out of time and consigned to the runners-up spot for the second year running.

The tournament heralded the budding depth of talent being built with new caps Dunn, Burger, Holly Fowler, Claire Kersten and Kimiora Poi leaving a strong imprint while captain Sulu Fitzpatrick was an influential presence throughout.

Earlier in the day, the FAST5 Ferns made no mistake in their must-win final round robin match, against Malawi, when delivering a clinical 36-16 win to advance to the final.

*Continued on next page...*



Continued from previous page...

Effective and efficient across all areas of the court, the New Zealanders held the upper hand throughout. Young shooters Dunn, with five, and Falkner, three, provided the impetus from the two-point shooting zone while Fitzpatrick and Burger were a suffocating and active presence on defence.

The FAST5 Ferns negated Malawi's power play with precision and slick transitional play, even employing the defensive hoist as the Queens struggled to find any joy under the hoop. Fleet-footed midcourt duo Poi and Whitney Souness provided the speed and movement on attack and defence to round out the all-important win.

The FAST5 Ferns unbeaten run came unstuck in their opening match of the day in a dour struggle against pre-tournament favourites Jamaica.

Both teams struggled with their shooting accuracy, Mes having the chance to pinch the game for the FAST5 Ferns after the final buzzer but couldn't convert from the two-point zone, allowing Jamaica a low-scoring 23-22 win.

After a hectic two days of the high-octane, fast-paced version of the game, the closeness of the teams was exemplified when four of the nine games on the final day were decided by one point.

Final placings: FAST5 Ferns 1, Jamaica 2, Australia 3, Malawi 4, England 5, South Africa 6.

**H**AD A fantastic day the other day going through some of my old programs. There are some advantages of getting old, and that's having some great memories and boy do I have great memories. Rugby league has been very good to me - Sir Peter Leitch



## Go the Kiwis - Joyce Putohe





### Return Of Original Colours For Club's 25Th Season

**T**HE VODAFONE Warriors have confirmed they will return to the team's original colours when they celebrate the club's 25th season in the first-grade competition in 2019.

The Canterbury of New Zealand-designed home strip was launched today, evoking memories of the original Auckland Warriors' debut in the then-Winfield Cup in 1995. The distinctive blue jersey with green, red and white trim is being recreated as the club eyes a campaign packed with special moments and an array of initiatives.

"The original 1995 strip is one of the most iconic and distinctive in New Zealand sport," said Vodafone Warriors CEO Cameron George.

"It signifies a time when the sporting landscape in this country changed forever, opening the way for professional sporting franchises as we know them today.

"We couldn't be more excited looking ahead to our 25th season. It's going to be huge and we know our players will be honoured to mark the major milestone in the colours that mean so much to us."

Designing the 1995-inspired home kit brings Canterbury of New Zealand full circle.

"Canterbury of New Zealand is delighted to be at the heart of this historic moment. We've been committed to the Vodafone Warriors since their launch 25 years ago, as foundation apparel partner, and we're proud to have supplied playing kit every year since 2009," said Canterbury of New Zealand managing director Jamie Meikleham.

"With this design, we're taking a step into the future with the Vodafone Warriors, built on cues from the past. We're excited and proud to see the mighty blue, red, white, and green come to life on the field again."

Pre-orders for next season's home jersey are now being taken with the new kit expected to land in store on December 14 – just in time for Christmas.

**Pre order: <https://shop.warriorsstore.co.nz/new/>**



2018 Trillian Trust  
**Māori Sports Awards**

Te Tohu Taakaro o Aotearoa Charitable Trust

2018 National Māori Sports Awards  
Vodafone Events Centre - Manukau  
Saturday 24 November 2018



**FEATURING**  
**THE KOI BOYS**



For almost a decade, the charismatic all-singing, all-dancing, all-harmonising The Koi Boys, have been crooning, dancing and entertaining as a collective, ranging from Motown classics through to current pop hits. The Koi Boys are made up of Danny Faifai, Kevin Keepa and Ngahere "Nuz" Ngatai, The Koi Boys made their charismatic first appearance on The Voice Australia.

**TICKETS AVAILABLE NOW FROM OUR WEB SITE**  
**[www.maorisportsawards.co.nz](http://www.maorisportsawards.co.nz)**

**Get movie deals  
any day of the week**

Thanks to Vodafone Fantastic Fridays

Visit [vodafone.co.nz/movies](http://vodafone.co.nz/movies)

**Vodafone**  
Power to you



Eligible customers only. Not available to business customers. \$2.50 admin fee applies. Full terms go to [vodafone.co.nz/movies](http://vodafone.co.nz/movies). One 2 for 1 Movie Voucher offer per person, per week.

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

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

## Our Sponsors

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

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



## The Newsletter Team

Here is the team that help me put together the newsletter each week. We have a number of fantastic contributors who send in content each week that along with my editorial gets wrapped up by our graphic designer and sent out by our distribution man to your inbox.

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

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