



Sir Peter Leitch's Mad Butcher Club

AT MT SMART STADIUM, HOME OF THE MIGHTY VODAFONE WARRIORS

Newsletter

2 December 2015

#101

No advertisements are paid for in this newsletter.

I WILL BE glad to get home. I could tell you Hawaii is a fantastic place and build it up, and to be fair I would not be fibbing because it is rather nice. I have been lucky enough to do a fair bit of travelling and I can tell you that the best little country in the world is right here –New Zealand.

The truth of the matter is that despite thoroughly enjoying my time with my girls and lovely wife for our 50th wedding anniversary, the same old thing that happens to me every time I go away, is happening in Hawaii.

I just can't wait to get home.

We are so lucky to live in New Zealand. If you offered me a million dollars to live somewhere else I would turn you down.

League Loses A Good Man

Peter McLeod, one of the people who first got what was then the DB Bitter Warriors into the NRL has died.

Vodafone Warriors managing director Jim Doyle said Warriors staff were devastated. "He was instrumental in the Warriors getting into the ARL as it was known back then. It's a massive loss for the club. He was old school, had huge integrity and when you talked to him he was always genuine."

Eric Watson Takes The Helm

On the good news front Eric Watson is now the 100 percent owner of the Vodafone Warriors, having bought out Sir Owen Glenn's half share.

Watson believes the club is in good shape and is excited about the future.

It is no secret that over the years Glenn and Watson fought like cats and dogs but it is full steam ahead

now.

The news made my week actually.

I just think it will allow the club to move forward, without the boardroom distractions, and the management to focus on the job.

It is no secret that 2015 was a huge disappointment, injuries being a major cause of misery that led to an end of season slump that left us all down in the dumps.

Even I was disappointed, and certainly managing director Jim Doyle could not believe it.. But I believe he will be all the better for a year in the job, and I know there is no one who works harder or who is desperate to see the Vodafone Warriors put in a good season and give the fans something to celebrate.

Draw For 2016 Is Out

Before the season proper starts we have a range of pre-season fixtures, including on February 13 against the Gold Coast Titans up in Whangarei, and a week later in Nelson when we face the Dragons.

That will be the Simon Mannering Homecoming game, because of course our captain hails from Nelson.

While our first two games of the season are away, games three and four, against the Storm and Knights, are at Mt Smart.

The Vodafone Warriors will also play three games out of Auckland in the upcoming season, two with Aussie clubs choosing to bring their home games to us.

The first of those is in round 7, when the Bulldogs, who seem to love the Capital, will play in Wellington.

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Round 10 sees the boys down in Christchurch to face the Penrith Panthers, and a week later the Canberra Raiders will be New Plymouth at Yarrow Stadium – although that is a home Warriors fixture.

Five Days A Week

And also making the news is the new NRL broadcast deal, which will see live NRL action five days a week coming in on TV - Thursday, Friday, Saturday, Sunday and Monday!

Become a member!

Now I want to say that I get a lot of people telling me they are huge fans of the club. If you really want that support to count for something, you have to become a fully paid up member – and it is not as expensive as you think.

For just \$30 fans can be part of the Vodafone Warriors membership experience. Support

your team in 2016 and sign up because it is a fantastic deal. Membership includes 2016 membership scarf and lanyard, discounts on Vodafone Warriors official merchandise, 10 percent discount on tickets to regular season home games and access to Vodafone Warriors members only merchandise.

At that price you can sign up the family –because that's an even better deal, with \$90 covering four people. As I say, being a member is the best way to show your support for the club.

Crikey, December already – I know what all my family are getting for Christmas.

Get yours at: www.warriors.kiwi

Tyson Fury Gets It Done

Tyson Fury got the job done against Vladimir Klitschko and it did not escape the attention of one of the best there has been. Evander Holyfield was on Twitter posting a mention congratulating Tyson but he also posed a question, one every boxing fan is asking – who's next?

The former world heavyweight champion put our own Joseph Parker on the list behind The Bronze Bomber – and I confess I don't have any idea who that is, and a rematch with Klitschko.

When someone of Holyfield's stature is taking notice I think it is safe to assume he sees great potential in our boy. It is a ringing endorsement in fact.

And you can see Joseph in action on Sunday in Hamilton when he headlines the Fight For Life at the Claudelands Arena against American Sherman Williams.



The Tweet.

Former Kiwi Jack Fagan Passes Away

Former Kiwis fullback Jack Fagan has died, news everyone who knew him will take hard, because he was a good man, one of the best.

Kiwi No 401, Jack played tests between 1961-65 and scored 97 points along the way.

Jack was a prolific goalkicker throughout his career at club, Auckland representative and Kiwis levels, but it was his defensive capabilities his game was based around.

He represented the Kiwis overseas in England, France and Australia, and was also the instigator and first chairman of the NZ Rugby League Museum.

League identity Ray Haffenden said Jack also served for many years on the NZ judiciary, but above all else, was a “bloody great bloke and a real gentleman”.

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



Facebook



Instagram



Twitter



THE GREATEST WEEKEND

SAT 6 FEB & SUN 7 FEB 2016, WAITANGI WEEKEND
EDEN PARK, AUCKLAND

BUY NOW

THERE ARE less than 70 days left until kick-off of the Dick Smith NRL Auckland Nines and I can't wait! With Issac Luke, Roger Tuivasa-Sheck and Shaun Johnson all itching to take the field in the awesome 'Spirit of the Warriors Nines jersey, I'm not the only one who thinks they have their best chance yet to take home the trophy. Eric Watson, who is now the sole owner of the Vodafone Warrior's, is predicting great things for them in 2016 and even stated, "I don't want to jinx it [but] I think we'll go close to winning the [NRL Auckland] Nines."

So get your tickets for yourself, your mates, your family - they will make great Christmas presents!

The Butcher can also reveal that big Wendell Sailor is in town next week to talk about the Nines. Keep your eyes peeled for the big guy, he's a fantastic ambassador for the Nines and rugby league and a bloody good bloke. Boy can he talk though! He can out talk the Butcher and that's no easy feat! Tune in to my newsletter next week when I'll have some great Nines prizes to give away!

In the meantime, get your tickets, 2 x day pass from \$69 (plus fees) and kids are half price in most categories - www.ticketek.co.nz/nines



Photos courtesy of www.photosport.co.nz



Waiheke	Rangitoto	Hunua	Piha
Roosters	Knights	Warriors	Dragons
Rabbitohs	Cowboys	Bulldogs	Raiders
Eels	Panthers	Sea Eagles	Sharks
Storm	Tigers	Broncos	Titans



VODAFONE WARRIORS GO NATIONWIDE IN 2016

CONFIRMATION OF the 2016 NRL draw today has ensured the Auckland-based Vodafone Warriors will play in five other cities around New Zealand in the same season, more than any other side in the club's history.

Apart from the historic New Plymouth home game announced on Monday, the release of the full draw has revealed the Vodafone Warriors will play away games in Wellington and Christchurch on top of trials already set for Nelson – another first – and Whangarei.

In the space of six weeks the Vodafone Warriors will be front and centre of an NRL roadshow taking in Wellington's Westpac Stadium in round seven (Canterbury-Bankstown), AMI Park in Christchurch in round 10 (Penrith) and New Plymouth's Yarrow Stadium in round 11.

"It's our goal to make the Vodafone Warriors more accessible for fans throughout New Zealand so it's hugely exciting knowing we'll be playing at five venues outside Auckland in 2016," said Vodafone Warriors managing director Jim Doyle.

"We're obviously pleased about taking the very first NRL match to New Plymouth while visiting the South Island twice in the same season is also a breakthrough. We've never been to Nelson before

and it's the first time since 2010 that we've been to Christchurch.

"It's a great opportunity for fans from around the country to see the Vodafone Warriors and also for our members to travel to those cities to support their team. We're really looking forward to it."

With 11 games again scheduled for Mount Smart Stadium, the Vodafone Warriors will play 14 of their regular season matches in New Zealand.

"It's a big positive for our members and fans and also for the players having those extra games not just at home but in so many different places around the country," said head coach Andrew McFadden.

"Certainly it will help with our preparation and our routines knowing we won't travel as much as we usually do. It's a boost as well for the team being able to play more games in front of our own supporters."

Apart from the games scheduled around New Zealand, McFadden welcomed the finish to the regular season which has given the Vodafone Warriors a rare home game, in fact two on end; they meet Wests Tigers and then the Parramatta Eels in the final two rounds after last having a season-ending home match in 2012.

#NRLDraw



2016
NRL DRAW

RD	DATE	LOCAL TIME		OPPONENT	VENUE
1	Sat 5 Mar	5:30pm	AT	Tigers	Campbelltown Stadium
2	Fri 11 Mar	7:05pm	AT	Broncos	Suncorp Stadium
3	Sun 20 Mar	4:00pm	VS	Storm	Mount Smart Stadium
4	Mon 28 Mar	4:00pm	VS	Knights	Mount Smart Stadium
5	Sun 3 Apr	2:00pm	AT	Roosters	Arena Stadium
6	Sat 9 Apr	7:30pm	VS	Manly	Mount Smart Stadium
7	Sat 16 Apr	7:30pm	AT	Bulldogs	Westpac Stadium
8	Mon 25 Apr	7:00pm	AT	Storm	AMI Park
9	Sun 1 May	2:00pm	VS	Dragons	Mount Smart Stadium
6-9 May Rep weekend					
10	Sat 14 May	5:00pm	AT	Panthers	AMI Stadium
11	Sat 21 May	7:30pm	VS	Raiders	Yarrow Stadium
12				Bye	

13	Sat 4 Jun	5:00pm	VS	Broncos	Mount Smart Stadium
14	Sat 11 Jun	3:00pm	AT	Knights	Hunter Stadium
15	Sun 19 Jun	6:00pm	VS	Roosters	Mount Smart Stadium
16	Sat 25 Jun	5:30pm	AT	Sharks	Remondis Stadium
17	Sat 2 Jul	5:00pm	VS	Titans	Mount Smart Stadium
18				Bye	
19	Sat 16 Jul	3:30pm	AT	Manly	MIB Stadium
20	Sat 23 Jul	3:00pm	AT	Raiders	GIO Stadium
21		TBC	VS	Panthers	Mount Smart Stadium
22		TBC	AT	Titans	Chun Super Stadium
23		TBC	VS	Rabbitohs	Mount Smart Stadium
24		TBC	AT	Cowboys	1300Smiles Stadium
25		TBC	VS	Tigers	Mount Smart Stadium
26		TBC	VS	Eels	Mount Smart Stadium

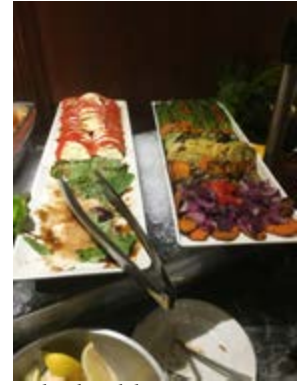
Go to warriors.hiw.co.nz/2016 to sign up as a member for 2016



Beautiful prime rib very tasty.



Crabs legs.



For the healthy eaters not me.

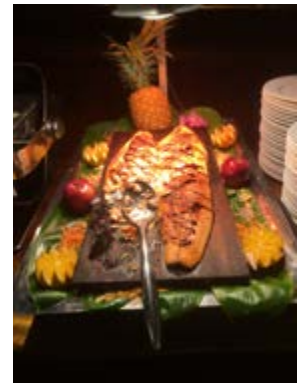
Thanksgiving Dinner



For those with a sweet tooth.



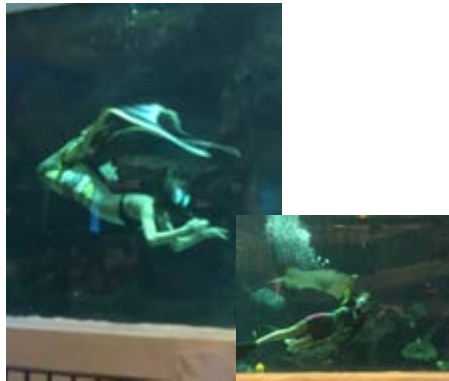
Janice loved these.



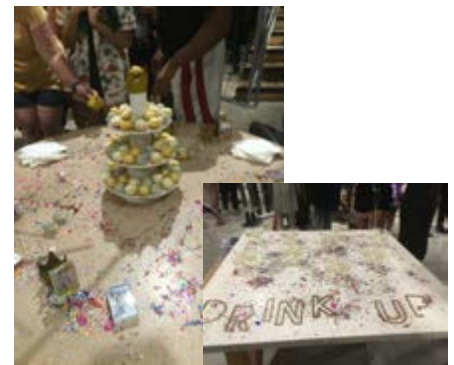
Local fish.



Not a bad Buffet on thanksgiving night..



Not a bad view while your having thanksgiving dinner.



Now this is the sort of shop I don't mind. Free drinks plus eats and a live band plus a dog doing the Hulu.



Live music fantastic!.



Let's do the Hulu.



The dancing dog taking a break.

IN HONOLULU, HAWAII



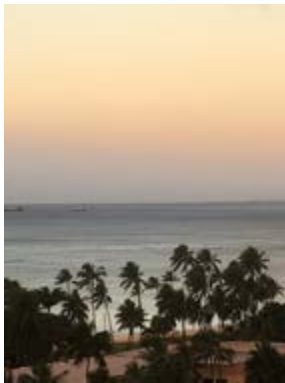
Had to try a local burger. It was ok, not as good as Wendy's!



The burger.



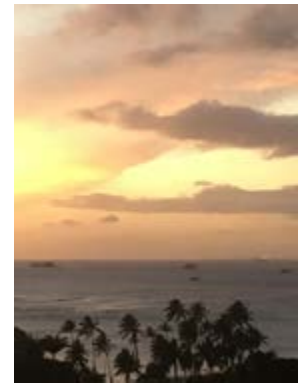
Meet this family in Honolulu they are from Gore deep in the South Island. From the left Georgia, Karyn, Mark, Sophie, Jacob Walker.



Sunset in Honolulu Hawaii.



Possibly the highest Christmas tree in Hawaii.



Sunrise from our apartment.



Not as good as Waiheke YEAH RIGHT!.



Possibly the highest Christmas tree in Hawaii.



Yes we had a few cloudy days and a little rain.



They love their Christmas trees in Honolulu.

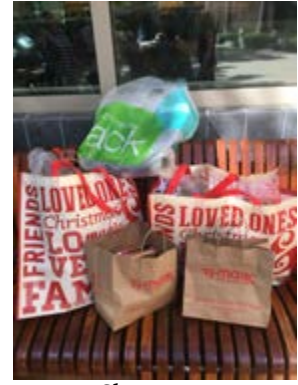
IN HONOLULU, HAWAII



The happy shoppers heading out to hit the shops again.



Janice loves her shopping... 3 CTR bags later.



Shopping.



You need a trolley this is just one bay of shopping trolleys at Walmart massive store.



Walmart.



Just brought another suitcase to put some of today's shopping in and I can't get another thing into it and we have just been to one shop.



With our mate Jim and Tony who live in Hawaii and have a place on Waiheke.



A big thank you to this place where we stayed in Honolulu suited our need 100%.



To be fair 5 days of shopping got to me and I weakened and had to have a Budweiser or 3 to calm me down.



Fantastic shrimp cocktail in Honolulu.



Garlic Shrimps very tasty.



Never had oysters like this before. They are on fire!

IN HONOLULU, HAWAII



Best hotdogs in Honolulu just had to have a couple.

I'm getting into the Christmas spirit already.



Rex Cunningham Passes

NZ RUGBY League is mourning the death of its longest-standing Kiwi, Rex Cunningham, late last week. Cunningham (Kiwi #291), at 91, was also one of our oldest surviving internationals, having made his debut in the first post-war side against the Great Britain tourists of 1946.

The speedy Auckland halfback went on to play 21 games for the national team, including four tests, over the next three years. He scored two tries on the 1947/48 tour of Great Britain and France, and played his final test against Australia in 1948.

The voyage to England for the northern hemisphere tour was delayed by strike action on the Auckland waterfront, but after arriving 17 days late, the Kiwis agreed to play the full schedule of games, which made for a crowded schedule. As a result, Cunningham played first the first six games within 15 days and, by the seventh, he was injured.

He returned, however, to score the final try of the tour in a 25-7 loss to France at Bordeaux.

Cunningham played for City from 1943-50 and represented Auckland from 1946-48.

VODAFONE WARRIORS MOURN FOUNDING FATHER

By Richard Becht



FEW NEW Zealand administrators have helped to change the New Zealand sporting landscape quite as significantly as Peter McLeod did.

His sudden death last Wednesday has served to underline the scale of his contribution to not just rugby league – and especially the Vodafone Warriors – but also to sport generally.

It was his astute and tenacious leadership which brought about a sea change through the creation of the Auckland Warriors, an outcome which would pave the way for a slew of New Zealand franchises to follow in other codes in Australian-based competitions.

His role as the Warriors' founding father and much more will be remembered when he is farewelled on Wednesday, fittingly at Rotorua's Energy Events Centre. As general manager of Events and Venues Rotorua, the centre was the focal point for much of McLeod's work throughout his tenure since 2005.

He also managed Rotorua International Stadium, securing trial matches there for the Vodafone Warriors against the Roosters (2010), Parramatta (2011) and Penrith just this year while other sporting highlights included rugby league Test matches involving the Kiwis and pool matches in the 2011 Rugby World Cup.

While Rotorua's civic leaders have been remembering McLeod for the work he did in driving development of the city's venues as well as securing a range of events, it's his feat in bringing the Warriors' dream to fruition which stands out as his legacy.

Pushing for a New Zealand team in what was then the Winfield Cup had first been aired publicly by Kiwi coach Graham Lowe in his column in Sunday News in 1983 before a group from the Mount Albert club went to the next level in 1989 by making a direct approach to Ken Arthurson, who was then chairman of both the Australian and New South Wales Rugby Leagues.

By the end of 1989, Peter McLeod, then in his mid-thirties, had come through the ranks to be elected chairman of the Auckland Rugby League; his background in the game was with Glenora and Waitemata in West Auckland while he also had a strong involvement in refereeing.

Ultimately McLeod would emerge as the man most responsible for transforming the dream of an Auckland Winfield Cup team into reality; while still ARL chairman he also headed up League Promotions Auckland, which had been set up to run the Winfield Cup bid.

It was anything but a straightforward process with the ARL running into a raft of challenges including resistance from the New Zealand Rugby League but on May 18, 1992, McLeod and Dominion Breweries chief executive Tony Sernack – DB had by then been signed as sponsor – made their final submission to the NSWRL.

“It was just Tony and me in front of the whole board,” said McLeod. He said he sensed Auckland was definitely ‘there’ after the meeting. “We actually found out what the decision was just as we got on the plane to head back to Auckland. When we were told yes, it was really just absolute bloody relief”

The understated McLeod, very rarely seen in the spotlight, would finally feel more than a sense of relief, rather one of some inner satisfaction when the ARL-owned Auckland Warriors came to life taking on the Brisbane Broncos in their debut at a jammed Ericsson Stadium on March 10, 1995.

There would be peaks and troughs ahead over the next 20 years but the Vodafone Warriors today stand as a testament to the work McLeod and his team did all those years ago.

McLeod was the club's foundation chairman from 1992-1996 as well as ARL chairman from 1989-1993 and had other rugby league roles before becoming the New Plymouth District Council's venue manager at Yarrow Stadium in 2000 and then general manager of Events and Venues Rotorua in 2005.

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Rotorua Mayor Steve Chadwick said McLeod's passing was "a huge loss to the creative and sports communities."

"Peter's name was synonymous with the Energy Events Centre and Sir Howard Morrison Performing Arts Centre. His passion, his expertise, and his skills back-of-house were masterly. He was always the 'go-to guy' and everybody knew him."

It was fitting and poignant that two significant announcements involving McLeod's beloved Warriors bookended his passing last week.

Two days before his death it was confirmed the Vodafone Warriors would take the first-ever NRL match to New Plymouth's Yarrow Stadium in 2016, the venue McLeod had run from 2000-2005 including securing the Vodafone Warriors for an NRL trial against the Eels in 2005.

And on Saturday the Vodafone Warriors' ownership story opened another chapter when it was announced Eric Watson had become the club's sole owner for the first time since taking control in late 2000.

Peter McLeod was very much in the can-do mould. While he shunned recognition he was good company, a man with a fund of amusing anecdotes and a ready chuckle when he told them.

He is survived by his wife Julie and daughters Fiona and Penny.



For just \$30 fans can be part of the Vodafone Warriors membership experience.. Support your team in 2016 and sign up today.!

INCLUDES:

- 2016 membership scarf and lanyard
- Discounts on Vodafone Warriors official merchandise
- 10% discount on tickets to Vodafone Warriors regular season home games in 2016
- Vodafone Warriors members only merchandise

ADULT \$30

FAMILY (4 PACKS) \$90



People often stop me and say they are big Vodafone Warriors fans. So I always ask them if they are a member. As being a member is the best way to show your support for the club. For 2016 you can become a member FOR ONLY \$30! BY BECOMING A MEMBER YOU ARE TRULY A FAN EVEN I HAVE SIGNED ON!

Get yours at: www.warriors.kiwi

The Tour that Died of Shame

By John Coffey QSM



DURING THE recent Kiwis Tests in Britain I wrote several columns with references to previous tours, including the infamous venture of 1926-27 which culminated in seven players being suspended for life by the New Zealand Rugby League a day after they returned to Auckland. I have since been asked to expand on how that tour imploded so disastrously.

First, I must confess to a conflict of interest. The story of the 1926-27 All Blacks (for that was what the NZRL insisted they be called) has been recorded fully in a book I wrote a couple of years ago, after some years of research. It was the only time I ignored by own advice about never writing a manuscript unless you first have someone prepared to publish it.

But the 1926-27 tour was an itch that I needed to scratch. It is now very difficult to get a sports book published in this country, so I was grateful when Phil Caplan at Scratching Shed Publishing – a firm which specialises in titles about rugby league and/or the north of England – included the book in its series of Rugby League Classics.

It takes almost 290 pages and plenty of illustrations to tell the whole sorry saga. Almost 90 years on, it is near unbelievable that a tour which started with so much hope should erupt in such dramatic fashion. The central figures, heroes and villains, are worthy of a Hollywood blockbuster and I will do my best to reduce 80,000 words to about 800.

England's decision to invite New Zealand to tour ahead of Australia caused outrage across the Tasman. But the 1924 English tourists had retained the Ashes Cup in Australia and been beaten 2-1 in the New Zealand Tests. The NZRL argued it had earned the right, and England agreed. Then the NZRL upset its rugby union counterpart by naming the team All Blacks.

NZRL president James Carlaw had been the central figure in the establishment of Carlaw Park in Auckland. He was angry when rugby union-controlled venues such as Athletic Park, Lancaster Park and Carisbrook were closed to the 1924 Lions and believed the 1926-27 tour would provide the finance for more grounds to be owned by rugby league authorities.

The NZRL also believed it had signed a “super coach” in Queenslander Ernest Mair, who had attached himself to the 1925 New Zealand team while it was in Australia. Mair convinced the NZRL he had the tactics and fitness methods to beat the British on their own soil. But Mair was to come into conflict with seven (of the 12) forwards, led by vice-captain Neil Mouat, even before the outward voyage had reached Fiji.

There was wrangling over laundry bills which ate into the players' meagre allowances – no small matter when Mair ordered them to dress for dinner in the tropics – and accusations the Australian downgraded the haka by ordering it to be performed at near-deserted railway stations during the overland journey across Canada. By the time the team reached England some players were demanding to return home immediately.

From there it was all downhill as an exasperated English Rugby League tried to play peace maker. There were various comings and goings. First, the seven players withdrew their services for several games; then the ERL told Mair to step down from his coaching and selection duties for a month; finally, after Mair resumed his roles without the stipulated review the seven players again revolted and were banished for the rest of the tour.

That left only five forwards (and no specialist hooker) among the 19 “loyal” players, and some of them were suffering from injuries. They soldiered on in the midst of a particularly harsh British winter, at one stage playing five games in 10 days over Christmas and New Year. Their so-called rest days were spent on long, smoky, cold train trips from Wales to the northern counties. There were numerous examples of extreme courage as backs volunteered to fill the forward vacancies, and players appeared in as many as 15 consecutive games.

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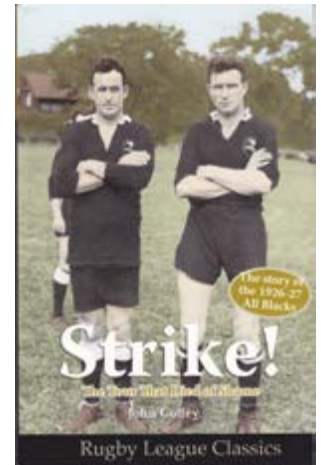
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Finally, the “loyal” players threatened to mount a strike of their own as they sat in the Headingley dressing room before the third Test match. They had been incensed that the ERL gave money to the “strikers” to tide them over on the six-week homeward voyage. But captain Bert Avery, a towering figure who proved himself to be one of the best forwards in the game, managed to persuade his team-mates to front up one more time.

It was amazing these amateurs won half of their 34 games against semi-professional rivals who were accustomed to ruling the rugby league world. To make matters worse, the north of England was in a financial depression in the wake of the 1926 General Strike and an on-going miners’ strike. On occasions angry fans who could not afford to pay the one shilling fee to go through the turnstiles broke down fences to watch the games. The ERL and NZRL both lost money. James Carlaw’s dream had become a nightmare.

Loyalty medals were struck for the 19 players who completed the tour. All involved swore vows of silence and the evidence from the enquiry was buried deep. Mair, whose wife not only toured but also sometimes led the players onto the field, returned to Queensland, where he was to be accused of arranging to burn down one of his less profitable hotels. The seven life suspensions were ended by the NZRL in 1962, by which time several of them had died.

The book is called Strike! The Tour That Died of Shame. It can be found in some New Zealand libraries, or from www.scratchingshedpublishing.co.uk at £13.99 (about \$32).



L4L Foundation Helps League Community

By Grant Chapman

IN 2010, as part of its “more than just a game” philosophy, New Zealand Rugby League created the League 4 Life Foundation to help those in our game who have fallen on hard times.

Headed by NZRL patron Sir Peter Leitch, the charity grew out of a need to assist members of the rugby league family, either through direct financial support or assistance in accessing the required services from agencies that already existed within the community.

To achieve this goal, the foundation will occasionally hold events to raise the funds needed – the next event will be in conjunction with the Barfoot & Thompson Twilight Summer Series at Ellerslie Racecourse on February 4.

Among the most recent recipients of help from the L4L Foundation was Hibiscus Coast league mother Melissa Galley, who has been battling cancer, after she was diagnosed with a tumour behind her right eye.

Her procedure included the removal of the eye, but Melissa is currently doing well in her recovery, with the support of her family – husband Karl and two

sets of twins (Blake & Jacob, Carson & Lily).

“After such radical surgery, I’m pretty optimistic,” she says. “I like to keep positive that I’m going to beat this.”

When sister-in-law Fiona Anson brought Melissa’s plight was brought to the attention of League 4 Life, the foundation responded with a \$5000 grant.

“It has been absolutely amazing,” says Melissa. “It has enabled us to do all sorts of day-to-day things that become more difficult when you’re reduced to one income.”

This is why the League 4 Life programme exists.

“Wherever there are people within our rugby league community that need help, that’s where we want to be,” says NZRL community general manager Jacob Cameron.

“Families like the Galleys are part of our family, so why wouldn’t we do everything we can to help out?”

League **4** Life

Summer Fundraiser



Thursday **February 4**, 2016 at the **Ellerslie Racecourse**

Come Racing! Join us at the League 4 Life Summer Fundraiser to be held at Ellerslie Racecourse as part of the Barfoot and Thompson Twilight Summer Series. **So why not get a group together and support a great cause and have some fun at the same time.**



Stephen McIvor
MC for the Event



Sir Peter Leitch
NZRL & League 4 Life Patron

Plus you never know which **league personalities** will be present.

By purchasing a ticket to the Summer Fundraiser you are making a generous donation to the League 4 Life Foundation. Your ticket price includes:

- **A donation to the League 4 Life Foundation**
- Entry into the exclusive **League 4 Life marquee**, located on the **Champagne Lawn** with sweeping views of the home straight and Winning Post
- **Gourmet BBQ buffet dinner** designed by our award winning chefs incorporating the best New Zealand ingredients, featuring hot items from the grill, a selection of salads, finished with tea and coffee
- **Complimentary drink** on arrival for each guest
- Racecourse admission, racebooks and pens
- Convenient access to betting facilities and a cash bar

Click here to learn more and buy your ticket for only \$50!



ALTHOUGH CHRISTMAS is less than a month away, there is plenty happening on the Australian sporting scene and this includes a lot of Rugby League.

The big news was the announcement last Sunday that an American college Gridiron game will be played in Sydney next year. On Saturday night, 27 August 2016, at 7.30pm. The University of California, Berkeley will play the University of Hawaii in the opening game of the NCAA season. This is not an exhibition or a trial game. It is a fair dinkum competition clash and although it is not an NFL match, it will still provide some quality American Football. The logistics involved in bringing two NFL teams to Sydney for a competition game is enormous, but the NSW government Minister of Tourism, Major Events and Sports, Stuart Ayres, said that down the track, this was a possibility.

" A College game is the logical place to begin, " said Ayres, " and if things go well, maybe in the future we could host an NFL game. "

After the match in Sydney, the Hawaii Rainbow Warriors will fly halfway around the world for their next game. This match is on 3 September and they play the Michigan Wolverines at Ann Arbor, which is 15,190 kms east of Sydney.

The University of California Berkeley Golden Bears will not have it so bad as, at this stage, they have an open date on 3 September. They then go to San Diego to take on San Diego State University on 10 September.

In Rugby League news, Manly's new coach, Trent Barrett, was quick to criticise the 2016 NFL draw that was made public last Friday.

" It is unfair and dangerous for my players, " Barrett said, " as in the first nine competition rounds we have four, five day turnarounds. "

The NRL's Head of Football, Todd Greenberg has already had some contact with Manly officials, Bob Fulton, Barrett and CEO Joe Kelly and you can bet there will be more to come from this issue.

Titans and Australian Test player, Greg Bird, is hopeful of regaining his club's captaincy for 2016, while his wife, Becky, is expecting the couple's first child in April. According to the Sunday Telegraph, after Becky's 12 week scan, Greg and his wife were given the option to terminate, as there was a high risk their child could have Down Syndrome or the fatal Edwards Syndrome. Now 31, Bird has played 213 NRL games, 16 State of Origins and 17 Tests.

Rumours are strong that Mal Meninga will be appointed as Australian coach in 2016 and so relinquish his long and successful role with Queensland. Stories are circulating that he will be offered around \$300,000 a season if he accepts the job. Penrith and Cronulla will celebrate 50 years in the big time in 2016. Both played their first competition matches on the same day, 2 April 1967. Cronulla beat Easts 11-5 at the old Sydney Sports Ground, while Penrith went down 15-12 to Canterbury at Belmore Oval. The Sharks finished at the bottom of the 12 team competition with three wins, one draw and 18 losses, while the Panthers, were second last with five wins, two draws and 15 losses.

Sonny Bill Williams is in Sydney working out with the Sydney Roosters. Sydney papers reported that he is training with the Roosters as he prepares for the Rio Olympics Sevens tournament. It was also written that he has made a decision to visit children in the Lebanese refugee camps.

We Should Honour Our Sporting Heroes While They're Alive

By John Deaker



WE FINALLY had the public service celebrating the exceptional life of Jonah Lomu on Monday. It might not seem a big thing to some people, but if we are going to retain Knighthoods surely a man like Lomu deserves to be honoured (it would have been preferable while he was alive but it's not totally too late) or it detracts quite a lot from the system itself.

Everybody's opinion differs regarding the significance of getting a knighthood. What most agree on though is that it's a tremendous honour to be knighted and the recipients are usually extremely proud to be acknowledged for what they've achieved. It therefore remains stunning that 2 of our sportspeople that have inspired a huge number of people within New Zealand - and further abroad - have so far been overlooked for knighthoods: Jonah Lomu and Martin Crowe.

To make matters worse they've both been overlooked during lengthy periods when they've both been very sick. A knighthood could therefore not only have given these two legends of New Zealand sport a much-needed lift but it also may have been great for the Queen's Honours system's public relations.

There's been some criticism leveled at the government for them electing to contribute \$300,000 to the public reception at Eden Park. The government were probably damned if they did and damned if they didn't fund this. At least someone put up the cash to ensure it happened. However, the perception these critics voiced that John Key and the government used this situation to win some votes does have some merit when you look at their failure to ever give Lomu a Knighthood ; Why didn't they wake up to what a legendary figure he was while he was alive!?

Maybe this oversight is indicative of what many people over the years have argued: that Lomu was more warmly received and idolized overseas than he was in New Zealand. This explanation doesn't make for a legitimate excuse though. The fact that Lomu never won a World Cup would be a lame excuse too - especially when the majority of the All Blacks that have been knighted played at a time when there was no World Cup!

We all often require something or someone to be taken away from us for us to realize how much it meant to us. Sadly, that may be the case for New Zealand

and many New Zealanders when it comes to Lomu. Maybe he was just too big and too 'freaky' for many people to know how to handle him?

What we do know is that New Zealand has always had a Tall Poppy Syndrome and it's especially apparent in relation to many of our top sportspeople. They are idolized but they are also chopped down by people when half a chance presents itself. Jonah copped some harsh criticism during his playing days, especially as he battled with his general health and weight problems during the twilight of his career. At times people would dwell on the obvious weaknesses he had rather than focus on the amazing, unprecedented strengths that he possessed. They also unrealistically expected him to perform Super-human feats with the ball every time he got it.

Jonah's marketability also saw him receive huge endorsement deals that New Zealand rugby players hadn't been able to earn before. This didn't always sit well with many Kiwis. Even now many New Zealanders struggle with some of our sporting stars earning millions of dollars, despite the fact that their earnings pale in comparison to the top sportspeople in major codes in the United States and Europe.

Martin Crowe is someone who's often felt the brunt of New Zealand's tall-poppy syndrome over the years. Like Jonah Lomu, he ironically also doesn't appear to have been ENOUGH of a tall-poppy to be worthy of a knighthood! This has happened despite Crowe being renowned as our second best cricketer of all time (behind Sir Richard Hadlee) before going on to be viewed by many cricket fans as one of the best cricket writers in the world.

Sadly it appears the same mistake (of not honouring him while he's alive) will be made with Crowe as was made with Lomu. Crowe's insurance company has already paid out on his death and if the current government were going to Knight him they had their prime opportunity to do so earlier this year.

Whether Lomu gets knighted now that he's passed away remains to be seen. What we do know from the way his sudden death has been received around the world is that no Knighthood, statue or memorabilia can do justice to the excitement and inspiration that he bought so many people when he was alive - and he will continue to inspire many more people long after he's passed away.

Historic Win For Our Football Ferns Over Brazil

By John Deaker



THE FOOTBALL Ferns secured New Zealand's first ever victory over Brazil on Brazilian turf when they beat the 7th ranked team 1-0 in Sao Paulo on Sunday. The victory holds special significance for the Football Ferns with the Olympics being held back on Brazilian territory in August next year. Unlike the men, our women's team don't have an age-restriction on their players for the Olympics so it's a huge confidence boost for the Abby Erceg captained team's Olympic campaign.

Brazil's local conditions were a significant factor in the match and both teams took an extra drinks break in the middle of each half to help the women deal with the heat. New Zealand's winning goal came from a classic free kick situation in the 35th minute. Brazilian footballers are renowned for being temperamental and after a free kick had been adjudicated to New Zealand outside the box a few of the Brazilian players got distracted arguing with the referee. This enabled Amber Hearn to take up an unmarked position on the edge of the box where she nailed home the free-kick that Rosie White delivered to her once the referee allowed her to take the kick.

There's actually been times in recent years when the Football Ferns have probably played better than they did on Sunday but not been able to secure a victory. Coach Tony Readings referred to this after the game.

"We've had a lot of disappointments this year with some really good performances without getting the result," he said.

"We were happy with the performance but the exciting thing for us is that we can play a lot better than that. We can definitely be a lot more cohesive when we've got the ball. So it's nice to say for once that we've played well but there's room for improvement even though we got the win."

The victory for the Ferns again confirms what many people believe : that the Football Ferns are one of New Zealand's most under-rated sports teams. There'll now be less chance of the 16th ranked team in the world creeping under the radar going in to the Olympics next year , but most teams are aware they'll usually get a very tough match when they take on the New Zealand women these days anyway.

A Lovely Thank You From Conner

THANK YOU so much Sir Peter I'm honoured to be a kiwi mate and looking forward to reading your book you are the kindest man I have met and hope you all the best in the future I just want to say a massive thank you.

Conner from the UK



Help Out Youthline

ADETOLA ADELOWO, our Shared Support Administrator at Youthline, shows off the recently won Vodafone Warriors Heritage jersey from entering the Mad Butchers popular weekly newsletter.

We will be auctioning this magnificent Vodafone Warriors Heritage jersey off soon. Hopefully we can get a few Warriors to autograph, to raise funds towards our Youth Worker programmes in schools and the many communities.

Any bids will be greatly received by contacting Simon at simonj@youthline.co.nz



2017 RLWC Qualifiers - Americas

By Phil Caplan

December 4: USA vs Jamaica
December 8: Jamaica vs Canada
December 12: USA vs Canada

THE THREE 20-man squads have been confirmed for the Firehouse Subs World Cup Qualifiers – Americas, due to take place in Florida from 4th to 12th December.

Hosts USA Hawks start as favourites, with new head coach Brian McDermott, fresh from Leeds Rhinos' historic treble-winning season, set to take up the reins for the tournament when he arrives in Jacksonville on December 1st.

Nine domestic clubs are represented with Philadelphia Fight leading the way with five selections, while seven heritage players are also included, five of whom played in the 2013 World Cup – including the Howard brothers Danny and Steve - and two newcomers, Taylor Howden and Sam Carson.

All of the non-domestic based players have been willing to finance their own travel to the States.

Influential half back Rich Henson has also recovered from injury suffered in the first game of the Colonial Cup against Canada.

“We will need to step up again if we are going to qualify for our second consecutive RLWC,” said USARL chairman Peter Illfield. “Brian will no doubt raise the bar and provide a far more consistent and intense preparation.”

McDermott noted: “The task of qualifying for a World Cup isn't something that comes around too often and it's that challenge that draws me to the role. I have passed on ideas about how we might play and between Peter and the USARL management there's been a significant amount of preparation gone on already.”

There is a buoyancy around Canada, the Wolverines also under new management with native Canadian and former NRL player Aaron Zimmerle, head coach of Tweeds Head Seagulls and Queensland Residents, in charge for the first time.

He has arrived in the country, begun overseeing preparations and has already conducted a skills session for the British Columbia West Coast Academy, where 25 players - including six who travelled from Alberta - were put through their paces, and local coaches given a masterclass.

Zimmerle intends to do the same in Toronto this weekend, and has overseen the announcement of the squad for the Qualifiers.

Highly-rated, Queensland-based brothers Rhys and Ryley Jacks are included and Zimmerle noted: “The selection of the final 20 players caused many tough decisions but it also means we have a high quality squad.

“The purpose of coming over two weeks early was to allow myself and assistants Andy Blackburn and Jamie Lester time to work together while assessing the strengths of our players.”

He added: “From that we can then refine a game plan that gives us the best opportunity to defeat Jamaica and America.”

The Wolverines will go in to camp in Florida from December 4th-12th with the aim of becoming the first Canadian side to qualify for the Rugby League World Cup, after recently beating the USA twice to retain the Colonial Cup.

Jamaica are the outsiders, but

13 of their squad come from the Championship or League 1 in the UK.

A trio of players travel over from Hunslet Hawks – Danny Thomas, Mo Agoro and Richie Barnett – with Batley and Keighley each providing a pair.

Strong-running Bradford and former London and Hull Kingston Rovers winger Omari Caro is the highest profile inclusion, along with Sheffield Eagles' Corey Hanson.

“We have a good mix of players who have been there before, as well as debutants who will add spark to the team,” said JRLA Director of Rugby and head coach of the Reggae Warriors, Romeo Monteith.

“We looked at each position and tried to get the best candidate based on form and commitment to the programme.”

Monteith continued: “There are some good players who missed out, but I believe that speaks of the strong pool we have to choose from.

“Our UK-based players will add a degree of professionalism and know-how and compliment a strong core of domestic players who have proven themselves in the local leagues and in representative games.”

Jamaica face hosts USA in Jacksonville on 4th December and must back up against Canada in Deland four days later.

The matches will be live-screened via ginicam - [Click here!](#)



Trillian Trust 2015 Māori Sports Awards

LISA CARRINGTON MAJOR WINNER AT THE 25TH MAORI SPORTS AWARDS



World and Olympic canoe racing champion, Lisa Carrington *Ngāti Porou, Te Aitanga-a-Māhaki* took out three major awards at the 25th Maori sports awards, hosted at Turangawaewae Marae, the home of the Māori Sports Awards Trust patron, Kiingi Tuheitia.

Main award category winners on the night were:



TE TAMAHINE-Ā-PAPATŪĀNUKU
TE WANANGA O AOTEAROA -
JUNIOR MĀORI SPORTSWOMAN OF
THE YEAR
STACEY WAAKA *NGAI TUHOE,
NGATI PUKEKO RUGBY SEVENS*



TE TAMA-Ā-RANGINUI
MIGHTY RIVER POWER - JUNIOR
MĀORI SPORTSMAN OF THE YEAR
AKIRA IOANE *TE WHANAU-A-APANUI,
NGAPUHI RUGBY*



HINEAHUONE
FLETCHER CONSTRUCTION -
SENIOR MĀORI SPORTSWOMAN OF
THE YEAR
LISA CARRINGTON *CNZM NGATI
POROU, TE AITANGA-A-MAHAKI
CANOE RACING*



TE TAMA-Ā-TĀNENUĪRANGI
AOTEAROA FISHERIES - SENIOR
MĀORI SPORTSMAN OF THE YEAR
NEHE MILNER-SKUDDER *NGĀTI
POROU, TAPUIKA RUGBY*



RONGOMARAEROA
THE ALBIE PRYOR, TRILLIAN TRUST
MAORI SPORTSPERSON OF THE YEAR
LISA CARRINGTON *CNZM NGATI
POROU, TE AITANGA-A-MAHAKI
CANOE RACING*



MANU-KURA SUPREME MALE
ATHLETE OF THE PAST 25 YEARS
MICHAEL CAMPBELL *NGATI
RUANUI, NGA RAURU GOLF*



MAREKURA SUPREME FEMALE
ATHLETE OF THE PAST 25 YEARS
LISA CARRINGTON *CNZM NGATI
POROU, TE AITANGA-A-MAHAKI
CANOE RACING*





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Then post a stamped addressed envelope with your name, address, phone number and email to the address.

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UK Program
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SATURDAY 5 DECEMBER 2015 CLAUDELANDS ARENA



BURGER KING Fight for Life is back on Saturday 5 December, with yet another line-up of sporting legends, stars and celebrities clashing for your entertainment and a great cause, Hospice Waikato.

New Zealand Heavyweight Champion Joseph Parker, now ranked 6 in the world by the World Boxing Organization, will headline the event as he continues his journey on the “Road to the Title.”

International netball superstar Irene van Dyk has raised her hand to take on the challenge and faces Napier accountant Belinda Sommerville, who has suffered the sadness of losing family members to cancer and is inspired to fight for a cause that is close to her heart.

“The Bachelor” Art Green is set to lace up his gloves and square off against World Cup winning All Black Zac Guildford. Will the charming reality TV sensation find the inner beast required to face up against a current athlete in his prime?

Fellow reality TV star, X-Factor judge Shelton Woolright will go toe-to-toe with 3 News reporter and former Shortland Street star Jesse Peach, whilst the infamous Brown Buttabean returns to Hamilton in a much anticipated rematch against Waikato front rower, Loni “Tongan Bear” Uhila.

Tickets are in hot demand so book your corporate table of 10 now for the Burger King Fight for Life, the perfect event for your Christmas function to host either clients, staff or friends. Tables include a delectable four course dinner, generous beverage package and personal table service.

EVENT DETAILS

- EVENT NAME: BURGER KING® Fight for Life
- DATE: Saturday 5 December, 2015
- TIME: 6:30pm – Midnight
- VENUE: Claudelands Arena, Hamilton
- DRESS CODE: Formal dress
- BROADCAST: Live on SKY ARENA, PAY-PER-VIEW, 7:30pm

PURCHASE GENERAL ADMISSION TICKETS

- Tickets on sale at: www.ticketek.co.nz
- General Admission Tickets from \$39
- Call – 0800 842 538 / 0800 Ticketek

WATCH THE EVENT LIVE ON PAY-PER-VIEW

- LIVE on SKY Arena
- Saturday 5 December, 2015, 7:30pm
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- Call 0800 759 780
- Book online at: sky.co.nz/arena
- Pricing: \$39.95

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- Visit: www.duco.co.nz

THE CARD

- Joseph Parker v Daniel ‘The Mountain’ Martz
 - Irene van Dyk vs Belinda Sommerville
 - Art Green vs Zac Guildford
 - Shelton Woolright vs Jesse Peach
 - Brown Buttabean v Tongan Bear
- Jeff ‘The Hornet’ Horn (Aus) v Ahmed El Mousaoui
- Izu Ugonoh (Pol) v Vicente Sandez (Mex)

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Here is the team that help me make the newsletter each week. Between us we make the newsletter happen - and like everything it's a team effort.



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