

VODAFONE



# Sir Peter Leitch's Mad Butcher Club

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## Newsletter

17 March 2016

# #113

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### Coaching Merry-Go-Round is No Fun By David Kemeys



**T**HERE ARE FIRMLY TWO CAMPS – SACK VODAFONE WARRIORS COACH ANDREW MCFADDEN NOW IS ONE, THE OTHER IS GIVE HIM TIME.

Lining up in the second camp are Hugh McGahan, Stephen Kearney, Laurie Daley, the Mad Butcher, Frank Endacott...

Lining up in the first camp are talkback radio callers, Facebook posters, blog writers, plenty of media humps, frustrated ordinary fans...

The season started with plenty of talk about promise and the expectation level was ramped up but the facts are stark, played two lost two, not totally awful against the Broncos in going down 25-10, but woeful for 40 minutes against the Tigers in round one.

Meanwhile McFadden believes they are heading in the right direction, and talkback featured none other than Shaun Johnson on Monday, doing a better job in defence of the Warriors than he did on Friday night against the Broncos.

But all the rhetoric aside, do we really want another coach shown the door?

Are we not overlooking one important thing? It has happened before – repeatedly – and it has never worked.

On the face of it, it's a disaster, and one that might well get worse with a pretty convincing Melbourne Storm side next up at Mt Smart on Sunday.

Surely we did not really expect our new combinations to be world beaters from day one, and if McFadden is right, and we are heading in the right direction, then the only answer is more time.

Patience is not a strong suit of the average fan, and rightly so, because we have had to show more of it than most others - Cronulla aside.

The simple fact is McFadden isn't going before Sunday, so what can we do to turn it around? The first thing has to be stop giving away so many bloody penalties!

There were three in the first seven minutes against Brisbane and if anyone can blame McFadden for that they are more one-eyed than a Cantabrian.



Andrew McFadden after the pre season NRL match. NZ Warriors v Gold Coast Titans.  
Photo courtesy [www.photosport.nz](http://www.photosport.nz)

*Continued on next page...*

We put the Broncos under pressure near their line, then piggy-back penalties marched them down the field. You just can't do that.

Just to show I am not completely in the defend McFadden at all costs camp, I am unconvinced Robson should be at halfback and Johnson at stand-off. The latter, facing calls from all over the place to drop him, looked strangely out of sorts on Friday, and I for one can't wait to see Thomas Leuluai back in our jumper.

Pressure tells, and the criticism Johnson has copped this week must hurt him. It is a hard enough game without having to carry the weight of the world on your shoulders, so maybe getting off his back is worth a shot.

McFadden is convinced the pairing will improve with more games together, but one more shocker and the plug may well get pulled on that experiment.

You can't shy from the fact pressure is increasing on McFadden, reports out of Australia saying he has just weeks to save his job.

Meanwhile Warriors managing director Jim Doyle says the club is right behind McFadden.

I am a diehard Newcastle United football fan, and let me tell you that is no easy path either. Last week the board came out midweek to praise coach Steve McLaren, and declare loyalty to him.

He was sacked on the Friday.

It's easy to forget McFadden got the job after Matt Elliott was sacked a month into the 2014 season, fancy more of the same?

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## Johnson Cops It

**G**EE YOU can go from hero to zero in this game pretty quickly can't you?

Shaun Johnson is a quality player, we know that, but he suffered a terrible injury last year and we were, let's face it, rubbish without him.

He has not been on top of his game this season, though I for one believe it will happen for him.

But former NSW Origin player Ryan Girdler says Johnson should be dropped. "I was really surprised by some of the things he did," Girdler told a radio station.

"Sometimes you're going to have a rush of blood and you're going to do a poor kick on an early play, but to do it two or three times as a senior player, there needs to be consequences.

"I'd be saying give him a rest, and let him know that's not what you need from your senior player. Sometimes you need a wake-up call. He's not doing the job."

## Brisbane Broncos v Vodafone Warriors

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



Bodene Thompson in action.



Jacob Lillyman tackled.



Shaun Johnson eyes up a kick.

### Better But A Loss Is A Loss

Compared to the shocking game against the Tigers, we were much better going down to the Broncos 25-10.

That's our 10th loss on the trot but I don't think too many thought we would go to Brisbane and win.

Our attitude was better, we showed good intensity, defended well at times and had an 86 per cent completion rate.

On the other hand, we still looked a bit disjointed in attack, our kicking game was not much, and we gave away too many penalties.

Shaun Johnson, and this is why Girdler was so critical, made just one run for eight metres.

There's bound to be more calls for the head of coach Andrew McFadden ahead of this week's first home game against Melbourne.



Simon Mannering on the run.



Tuivasa-Sheck in action.



Warriors' Manu Vatuvei walks off after suffering an injury.



## Injuries A Blow

Not good to see winger Manu Vatuvei clutching his chest like that. It seems he could be set for a lengthy period on the sidelines with a rib injury, while Blake Ayshford also went off against Brisbane with concussion. He looked in la-la land.

Asked how tough it was to be two men down with just eight interchanges, coach Andrew McFadden said the rule change had impacted on the game more than most coaches thought it would.

The Broncos lost Corey Oates, and he will be sidelined for a month after suffering a dislocated shoulder.

### Bennett Relieved

Broncos coach Wayne Bennett said the Warriors were very committed and he was "pleased we got away with it in the end", while our coach Andrew McFadden said his side answered their critics.

"But when your whole forward pack has just got nothing left, it is hard to build anything - the challenge got too big for us."

### Isaac's Little Signals

After he got his first ever Warriors try on Friday night Issac Luke sent a message back to his wife Mickayela and his newborn daughter in Auckland hospital. The Luke's had their third child last week and the pair were still in hospital.

After scoring Luke made the letter M, then mimed rocking a baby, and blew a kiss.

Best of luck to all the family!

### Way Back For Konrad

Only a few weeks ago there was talk of Konrad Hurrell moving to the Gold Coast Titans.

Now he looks likely to return with Blake Ayshford and Manu Vatuvei out.

Hurrell made the NRL All Stars game in February but could not edge Ayshford for a starting spot. But McFadden has said Hurrell is in consideration against Melbourne, and also poured cold water on talk

"He is definitely in the frame he is contracted to us we are committed to Konrad."

## RTS Promises To Do Better

Roger Tuivasa-Sheck thinks he might have spent too much time on his attack and not enough on defence.

He had some blemishes against the Tigers and Brisbane but said he prided himself on his ability as a stopper when he was a Rooster, and he wanted to continue that. "I want to improve my defence. I'm focusing on how I can improve my attack but my defence, I need to go back to that."

The Kiwi international said he made the right move-coming to the Warriors. "I'm loving the challenges. It's definitely what I came for. I'm excited for what's next and that's cool. We're still working and we're far off from being a finished product."

### Issues Aplenty

There was a good piece from Michael Burgess in the Herald. He pointed out 10 issues as he saw it.

The first was switching off at the wrong times, what to do with Konrad Hurrell and said the much talked about new spine needed to improve fast. He said Shaun Johnson didn't run enough, Jeff Robson ran too much, Issac Luke ran out of gas and Roger Tuivasa-Sheck ran into problems.

Burgess also wrote that our communication was obviously all over the place, that he could not wait to see Thomas Leuluai back, and that our star roster did not look much like a team.

He was however full of praise for Bodene Thompson, but said our strategy did not seem clear.

The one that amused me was that he said our losing streak had to end sometime, especially with three of our next four games in Auckland.

Let's hope so!

### McGahan Calls For Patience

Kiwis great Hugh McGahan reckons all this talk of a 10-game losing streak is silly because last season is over, and much has changed at the club.

He says it is not all doom and gloom and can't see any point hanging coach Andrew McFadden out to dry.

"It's easy to jump on the Warriors because of their history and the fact they are the only NRL team in the country. Everyone is ready to have a crack," he wrote in his Herald column.

*Continued on next page...*

"I still believe they have a good team. What I saw on Friday was a big improvement on the week before and they're not that far off. It was a good performance against an excellent Broncos outfit."

### **Kearney Thinks The Same**

Kiwis coach Stephen Kearney is another on the "don't panic" bus. As both Kiwis coach and Broncos assistant, he probably has a better understanding than most about where we are at, and he was quick to remind people the Broncos got hammered 36-6 by the Rabbitohs on opening day last season.

"The panic button has been hit a bit too prematurely. The Roosters, who have won three consecutive preliminary finals, got beaten by 40-odd points. I know the calibre of the players in the Warriors team."

"It's always going to take a little bit of time to get used to each other and you can't replicate that at training, only under pressure in game situations. I'm sure they will start to hit their straps soon."

Kearney also confirmed he'll stick with Simon Mannering as Kiwis captain.

### **McFadden Keeps Believing**

Despite two losses Warriors coach Andrew McFadden believes we are heading in the right direction.

"It was a pretty tough affair," McFadden said of the game in Brisbane. "But there were a lot of positives."

Our halves combination is vital and it remains a work in progress. "I thought they were better than they were last week. It was a different style of game and I thought they were starting to form a combination that's only going to get better over time."

"In the time being, we need at the very least to turn up in that physical battle, and that's something we most definitely did on Friday."

### **The "Bro Culture" Nonsense**

I have tried to stay out of this one, but really, what was that all about?

Former Kiwis coach Graham Lowe made the criticism of a "bro culture" and the Aussie papers in particular lapped it up.

Who knows what he meant but we will always have a different culture to most teams in the NRL, because we aren't Australian for a start.

But Bodene Thompson, Simon Mannering, Thomas Leuluai, Ben Matulino are supposed to be soft? I don't think so.

I had to laugh when Kiwis coach Stephen Kearney got asked about it. "I'm not going to give that too much life. I'm not 100 per cent sure what that is myself, so I am not going to put any energy into it."

Okay we were poor against the Tigers and perhaps it was all just frustration, and we clearly still have a way to go. But nonsense like that really doesn't help.

Of course if we want the sniping to end we could always win.

### **First Win Of The Year**

Four tries in each half propelled the Vodafone Warriors to a 44-6 win over Wests Tigers in their second-round Intrust Super Premiership match at Leichhardt in Sydney.

The win was the first of the season not only for the Stacey Jones-coached side but for the club overall, after two losses each for the NRL and NYC sides in the opening two rounds and a loss for the ISP side last week.

The breakthrough was founded on a solid opening that yielded an early 4-0 lead through the first of centre Matt Allwood's two tries. Sustained pressure then netted three more tries before halftime through Jazz Tevaga, captain Ali Lauitiiti and replacement wing Viliami Kaveinga, who came on for an injured David Fusitu'a.

The 20-0 advantage was quickly extended to 32-0 on the back of tries to wing Charnze Nicoll-Klokstad and Allwood with Ata Hingano converting both.

While the Tigers responded with their only try of the day the Vodafone Warriors rounded off an impressive performance with tries to two of their big men, Patrick Siple and Albert Vete, to atone for their opening-round 36-22 loss to Illawarra last week.

The Vodafone Warriors have their first home match of the season next Sunday when they face the Newtown Jets at Mt Smart at 1.45pm.



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## Juniors Beaten

Brisbane held out the Vodafone Junior Warriors for a 14-8 win at Suncorp.

There was little in the contest at halftime with the Broncos just 8-4 ahead after Vodafone Junior Warriors halfback Zion Ioka had responded to Brisbane's two early strikes.

The home side's lead was out to 10 points with a third try early in the opening minutes of the second half but the Vodafone Junior Warriors were up for an arm wrestle.

They would finish with superior possession stats, completing 28 of 39 sets while Brisbane managed just 16 from 34, but ultimately they weren't able to translate it into enough points.

While a try to fullback Kane Telea in the 73rd minute provided hope of success in the closing minutes, it wasn't to be.

The Vodafone Junior Warriors will finally have a home game next Sunday when they face Melbourne in the opening leg of the club's first tripleheader of the season.

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**Air New Zealand's** Grabaseat has packages to see the mighty Vodafone Warriors take on the Canberra Raiders at Yarrow Stadium on Saturday 21 May 16. Starting from \$319 per person including return flights, one night at the new Novotel New Plymouth Hobson hotel, return airport transfers and Gold Covered match tickets.

See <https://grabaseat.co.nz/secure/getaways> for more details and to

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## Big League Magazine a Ripper

By David Kemey's



**T**HE BUTCH is always talking up Big League magazine so I thought, as a former journalist, I'd check it out and pass judgement. Turns out it's a ripper.

It's your weekly guide to the NRL season, and covers every club. Each year there are special Final Series issues, a souvenir Grand Final programme (which the Butch brought me back last time, and which I still haven't finished reading) and a bumper Season Review.

Every week Big League feature stories on the big name players, previews the big games and even has a Little League section for the young rugby league fans.

All the team lists are there, for all the grades, and there is a very comprehensive statistics section and up-to-date news.

Big League provides everything you need to follow the NRL and the app works really well too. You can go on line to organise a subscription or download the app. Well worth it. Just do a Google search.



## THIS WEEK IN BIG LEAGUE'S HUGE ROUND 3 ISSUE...

Jam-packed with FEATURES and NEWS, plus columnist **DANNY BUDERUS** and game analysis by **BEN IKIN**; plus **NRL**, **HOLDEN CUP**, **NSW CUP**, **QLD CUP** and **RON MASSEY CUP** team lists and a **FULL NRL DRAW**.

### FEATURES

- **Tony Williams** has hugely benefited from the Bulldogs' biggest off-season signing – former Sea Eagles trainer **Don Singe**. He's shed weight and is hoping to repay the faith **Des Hasler** has shown him after a disastrous 2015 season where injury limited him to just 11 games.
- The Cowboys are well-poised to try and back up their premiership win, but we step through time and talk to **Michael Hagan**, **Stephen Kearney**, **Michael Hancock** and **David Middleton** about why no club has gone back-to-back since 1992/1993 – and why **Gavin Cooper** and **Peter Parr** think North Queensland might be able to pull it off.
- **Jarrold Mullen** is often maligned by fans but the Knights' playmaker has plenty of great memories to call on when he plays his 200<sup>th</sup> game this weekend. To boost Newcastle's spirits, we reveal Wests Group will seriously consider taking ownership of the club when the NRL hands back the reigns.

Also **Ricky Stuart** hails forward **Iosia Soliola** as the face of the Raiders' new culture of resilience; **Kieran Foran** praises coach **Brad Arthur** for bringing in Manly's 'us against the world' mentality as Parra faces tough times and **Mitchell Pearce** is back at training and determined to give back to the community.

**PLUS...** **Danny Buderus** comes on board as a columnist and asks Knights fans to show patience as the team tries to build a future; **Mike Cooper** has become a key forward for the Dragons and hopes to extend his stay in Australia and **Daniel Mortimer** is happy to bide his time on the interchange at the Titans.

**AND:** Little League, lower grade previews, Top 8 unluckiest injury-prone players, news, The Analyst compares Issac Luke and Cameron Smith and a Shaun Johnson poster.



### THIS WEEK'S ISSUE

On sale at newsagents, supermarkets and at the ground from

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NewsLifeMedia



# A Legend Passes

By Bill Whitehead QSM

**I**T IS with profound regret I have to notify that the 1951 - 1961 Kiwi, George Menzies, passed away Wednesday afternoon. George was a schoolboy product from the Runanga club, having been in senior schoolboys triangular tournament in Greymouth in 1945.

In all he played in 29 tests (four tries). He toured Great Britain and France twice, Australia three times, attended three World Cups (1954, 1957, 1960), played France in NZ on three occasions (1951, 1955, 1960) Britain at home twice (1954, 1958) and Australia in 1961. He coached NZ at the 1975 World Cup. Geordie was admitted to Christchurch Hospital in mid December with a suspected broken leg, and went home with a new hip. A real legend, and a gentleman..RIP Geordie, everybodys friend. 16.3.2016



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**Anyone coming from out of town to the game on Sunday?** Would you like a tour of the stadium? Then come along to the Stacey Jones lounge (located at the back of the west stand and take the elevator up) by 2 o'clock. Once you're there ask for either Sir Peter Leitch or Dexter.

# Is Criticism Of Warriors' Playmaker Fair?

By Barry Ross



**S**OME PEOPLE are quick to criticise! Sections of the Australian media have been on Shaun Johnson's back early this year. In one Sydney paper last Monday it was reported that the Warriors' star had just the one run against the Broncos on Friday night for a measly six metres. On the surface, the report is correct but how did the players inside and outside him perform? Did he put any of his team-mates away? The match in Brisbane was just his second game in more than seven months, so he cannot be expected to return immediately to the level he was at before the bad injury. Not only that, but he is playing five eighth, not in his usual position of halfback. The coach believes five eighth is the best for the Warriors as a team unit and that is good enough for me,

Maybe in a month or so's time, the coach and the critics, can reassess the five eighth idea, but it is early days yet. Another thing that should be considered is that the Warriors played their first two games in the Australian heat.

An analysis of the Warriors efforts against Wayne Bennett's Broncos, show all is not doom and gloom, as some would have you believe. The Warriors were leading 8-6 after 30 minutes against the team that many have already selected as this year's Premiership winner. Another positive feature was the first half completions of 19 from 20 sets or 95 percent. They did drop off a little in this regard in the last 15 minutes of the game, probably due to the heat, but still managed to finish with 30 from 35 or nearly 86 percent.

The visitors also surprised the Broncos with their physicality. They showed they can match any team in this facet of play. Again the penalties went against the Warriors, 8-5 overall, including a 3-0 second half count. One of these second half misdemeanours was for not packing a scrum before the shot clock expired. This penalty is now a part of Rugby League history and a trivia question for years to come. " Who was the first team penalised for allowing the shot clock to run down. "

Souths again impressed. Although they played the Knights who appear to have a long and tough season ahead of them, the Rabbitohs were classy. They back each other up brilliantly, while the speed and precision of both their attacking plays and defensive reads are superb.

Canberra and Cronulla were also impressive and showed their supporters that good times are here. Both these sides have strong forward packs. The Parramatta players did not let their club's ongoing off-field problems worry them and they deserved their victory over the Cowboys. Kieran Foran certainly made a difference in his first game for the club and he will probably be even better this Friday night when the Eels meet the Bulldogs at the Sydney 2000 Olympic Stadium. This match will feature some frightening clashes, as the two powerful packs try to dominate.

Despite some second half lapses, the Tigers were the rightful winners against Manly. They will be favourites against the Titans on Saturday and if successful, will have a dream three wins start to their season. Tigers coach, Jason Taylor, said he was comfortable in releasing Marty Taupau to Manly. Maybe he doesn't feel the same now after witnessing how destructive Taupau was against his old club on Monday night.

Another good match this weekend, will be the Manly-Cronulla clash at Brookvale Oval. Manly will be desperate for their first win of the season. Both the Warriors and Manly have begun 2016 with two defeats. It will be interesting to see over the next few days, if the Sea Eagles receive the same scrutiny as the Warriors. Hasn't Manly's Jamie Lyon been a great player for a long period of time. He now has played 279 NRL first grade games, 209 with Manly and has 118 tries and 487 goals for 1,446 points in total. Now 34, this could be his last season in big-time football. Jamie also had two seasons with English club St. Helens, where he finished with 610 points (46 tries and 213 goals) in his 63 games. In 2006, St. Helens won the treble and in the 42-12 Challenge Cup final win over Huddersfield, he collected a try and 7 goals at Twickenham Stadium on 26 August 2006 before a crowd of 65,187.

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With Manly, he played a key role in the 2008 and 2011 Grand Final victories, as he did in the 28-20 World Club Challenge win over Leeds at Elland Road on 1 March 2009. The Manly centre has also played eight Tests (4 tries, 2 goals for 20 points) and 10 State of Origin games for NSW (Try and 8 goals for 20 points).

There was some conflicting news of fullbacks over the past few days. The Tigers James Tedesco was brilliant against Manly and he is rightly being mentioned as a possible NSW State of Origin player. Sadly, the Storm's Billy Slater is having continuing problems with his shoulder injury from last year. Slater turns 33 in June and reports are saying he is out of football indefinitely.

I would like to correct something I said in my piece last week. I wrote that the coaches were the ones who decided if a drink break is necessary during each half of football in warm weather games. I was wrong. It is the doctors of each team, but what criteria they follow before they make their decision, I am not sure.



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

*The Mad Butchers Weekly NRL Tipping Comp.*

By John Holloway

### NRL Round 3

		Sue Phelan	Joe Vagana	John Coffey	Fast Eddie	Monty Betham	Bill Hayward	High-Tackle Holloway
		<i>Maloney's Barber Shop</i>	<i>League Legend</i>	<i>Newsletter Columnist</i>	<i>Devonport Dutchman</i>	<i>The Warrior Boxer</i>	<i>Link Business</i>	<i>Richmond Bulldog</i>
Date/ Venue	Game							
17/03 - 1300 Smile	Cowboys v Roosters	Cowboys	Cowboys	Cowboys	Cowboys	Cowboys	Cowboys	Cowboys
18/03 - ANZ	Bulldogs v Eels	Bulldogs	Bulldogs	Bulldogs	Bulldogs	Bulldogs	Bulldogs	Eels
19/03 - Hunter	Knights v Raiders	Raiders	Raiders	Raiders	Raiders	Raiders	Raiders	Raiders
19/03 - Pepper	Panthers v Broncos	Broncos	Panthers	Broncos	Broncos	Broncos	Broncos	Broncos
19/03 - CBus	Titans v Tigers	Tigers	Tigers	Tigers	Tigers	Tigers	Tigers	Tigers
20/03 - Mt Smart	Warriors v Storm	Warriors	Warriors	Warriors	Warriors	Warriors	Warriors	Warriors
20/03 - SCG	Dragons v Rabbitohs	Rabbitohs	Rabbitohs	Rabbitohs	Rabbitohs	Rabbitohs	Rabbitohs	Rabbitohs
21/03 - Brkvale	Sea Eagles v Sharks	Sharks	Sea Eagles	Sharks	Sharks	Sea Eagles	Sharks	Sharks

#### How they're traveling....

Picks last week	5/8	4/8	5/8	5/8	5/8	3/8	5/8
Total picks	9/16	9/16	11/16	12/16	9/16	9/16	8/16

**F**IRSTLY MY apologies for the lack of story with last week's Tipping Spreadsheet, a communication breakdown left the story floating somewhere in electronic etherland, bummer!! Heaps of highly intellectual insights and intriguing male cow excrement down the gurgler...but here we go again.

Continued on next page...



**Tipster update.....**The Devonport Dutchman(5) stays in front but the old stager Jumpin Johnny Coffey (5) is hot on his heels....the possie is closing in with Super Sue, Montz and the canny High-Tackle carding solid 5s. Big Joe V hangin with a 4 and the cardsharp Billy dealt the dead-mans hand on 3. The Tigers result bit everyone, the Homie Warriors went 0 and 2 and the Cowboys shot down all but yours truly who was the only one to see the Eels doing the business..

**Footy talk...**Strong statements from the surging Sharks 30/2 over the non-fiery Dragons and the racing Rabbitohs who destroyed the knackerless Knights 48/6. Bellyache Bellamy was a lot calmer this week as his Purple gang even without Superstar Willy Slater were too strong at home downing the Dragons 34/16. The Doggies held out the promising Panthers 18/16 to go 2 from 2. The Eels wiggled past the play thru champion Cows 20/16...a close fought affair decided largely by the hard hitting Parra pack and the Townsville terriers error rate. The Broncos with tall timber wingman Corey Oates outstanding again grabbed the 2 points (25/10) against our boys. The Warriors showed a bit more defensive grit but lacked cohesion and thus penetration, not exactly a state secret that linchpins Johnson and Luke need to give a little thought to the latter. High Tackle picked the Bondi Junction boys to get up over the Green machine and they would have done if the otherwise excellent young gun Rooster Latrelle Mitchell had taken his kicking boots to the match. For all that Rickys resurgent Raiders deserved their never say die 21/20 result. The Monday nighter at Leichardt Oval was an all action affair and convinced a lot of doubters including my good-self that the prowling Tigers may well be a real threat in 2016...The Westies decided a couple of years back to trim the deadwood and put their future in the hands of young guns Aaron wooly Woods up front, Brooks and Moses behind the scrum and Triple-try Tedesco at the back and right now that is looking like a master-stroke. High value entertainment on show, Naiqama and Nofaluma out wide are having a ball off Moses cut out passes and deft kicks ahead. The Black and Golds carved up DCEs talent laden Manly roster 36/22 making vaunted centre pair Lyon and Matai look like yesterdays men. New coach Barrett still has plenty of work to do with the stuttering Sea Eagles... Mind you the wrecking ball ex Tiger Marty Kapow! Tapau was one who gave his all.

**Tipping Talk:** This weeks matchups...While the Roosters are starting to look better I can't see them avoiding a Cowboys backlash. JTs men were just a touch off colour against the eager Eels but the Queenslanders will settle this week. The Parra-troopers still have improvement in them and will need it against Dessys dominant Doggies. The Belmore bashers monster pack with the Reynolds/Mbye combo coming good are still warming to the task. The needy Knights will need more than a home ground advantage to tip over the gutsy Raiders. Nervous Nate Browns Coaltown Knights need to have a big look in the mirror if they want to avoid the wooden spoon race. The Blue Mountain Panthers are still trying to get out of the blocks, they ran the Bulldogs close and now find the Broncos galloping down the Highway to Hunter Stadium. The home crowd will help another close run affair. The Titans suddenly looked unlikely (after a bright start in the opening round) they will have their hands full if the home crowd can't reignite them against Jason Taylors terrific 2 and 0 Tigers. The drooping Dragons look brittle after their Shark park shakedown and Mickey McGuires table topping Rabbitohs who have stuck on 90 points in their first two hit outs will show them no mercy. Slammin Sam Burgess is back in business big-time for the Bunnies. The Sea Eagles will be at a low ebb and will need to fly a lot higher to outpoint the sharpish Sharks..... The slow starting Warriors will be without big Ben Matulino (suspension) and desperate to make a good beginning to the Mt Smart campaign but the Storms improving form will take some stopping. A loss (wash your mouth out!!) will no doubt fuel even more negative sniping and coach swap rumours but a win would of course lift everybody's spirits, here's hoping that's the case. My friends take heed, we need to gather at the Fortress of Faith this weekend to help our boys out! This Sunday 4pm Live on stage, yeah baby.. get your gears on wave those banners and signs and shout out for Cappys caped crusaders the mightyyyyy Vodafone Warrriioooorrss. My grandson Jack Stone and I are in our Bay 33 season ticket seats. Be there or be square.

If you wish to **subscribe** or **unsubscribe** please email Stephan Maier at  
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# Harvey Norman Community Warriors with Petrece Kesha

By Ben Francis



**S**HE MAY not hit the ball up or score out wide but Petrece Kesha still does plenty of hard yards. Now in her ninth season, the club's community relations officer loves her job. "I love coming to work. I can't imagine doing anything else."

Her work involves interacting with communities and charities to get the Warriors name out. "We are the first port of call for anything community-based, like assisting charities and education in schools."

This year the Warriors launched the Harvey Norman Community Warriors, which has already seen the players out in Whangarei and Nelson, something they'll repeat on road trips to Wellington, Christchurch and New Plymouth.

"The club loves getting involved in the community, and thanks to Harvey Norman, we have been able to do more. We have already been out there but we have more to do, which is really exciting for everybody involved."

And with Harvey Norman's help, the club has set up a community classroom at Mt Smart, where children learn to use the Warriors values in their lives, and which will host holiday programmes in April, July and September.

The ACC Everyday Athlete Programme is also key to Petrece's work. During school visits, players talk about aspects of well-being, daily routines, hydration, sleep and a strong sense of belonging.

Just in case she doesn't have enough to do, the players the club is also continuing with its highly-successful Konica Minolta League In Libraries plan.

"The players interacting with the kids and the fans is the best thing about the job," Petrece says. "Lots of people don't see the hard work off the field, something the boys always do with a big smile. They enjoy it as much as the kids."

Petrece has been refereeing rugby league at club level since she was 18 and enjoys just being a Warriors fan, and watching her players. "I hope they get to the point of being consistent. They put in lots of hard work and effort behind the scenes, so hopefully we fans will get to see the benefit of that."

To read more on the Harvey Norman Community Warriors : [Click here](#)



*Petrece Kesha doing what she does best - Working in the community.*



**It's the end of an era! Outdoors with Geoff's last two shows EVER are coming up.**

**Watch Geoff Thomas on Rheem Outdoors with Geoff on Saturdays at 5PM on TV3.**

# It's a Big Week for Everyone At the Vodafone Warriors' HQ

By John Deaker



**T**HIS IS a big week for the Vodafone Warriors as they get ready to host their first home game day of the 2016 season on Sunday.

That naturally makes it an extra big week for the club's events and entertainment manager Bianca Bush.

This is Bianca's second year in the role with the Vodafone Warriors but she started in March last year so it's the first time she's been able to fully prepare for a season.

It's also the first time key people above her including managing director Jim Doyle and her immediate manager Aaron Lawton – the club's recently-appointed fan engagement manager – have been able to join forces for a home match. Bianca says one of the key goals in 2016 is encouraging Vodafone Warriors members and fans to arrive at Mount Smart Stadium as early as possible.

"We have created a pre-game ritual this season that sets up the main game, and a ritual we really want our members and fans to be fully involved in," she says.

"It's a big challenge having so many people cramming through the gates with five minutes until kick-off. The experience isn't that great. So we're putting more work into the pre-game entertainment so the fans have something to watch while they wait for the NRL team to kick-off."

Bianca says the Vodafone Warriors have a few things up her sleeve for this week but one specific she's excited about leading in to the season is an innovation that will mean four fans get randomly rewarded with a money-can't-buy experience from each home match.

"The players will wear a T-shirt out to warm up which has their name and their Vodafone Warriors number on it," she says.

"After the warm-up they'll throw their T-shirts in a kit bag and we'll have a non-playing player shoot four of these T-shirts out into the crowd. The people who claim the shirts will then have the chance go into the sheds after the game and meet the team, have their shirts signed and also have photos with the players. So it's about providing that exclusive experience that you can't get elsewhere."

Mini mods matches are always a popular game day feature. This weekend the clubs involved will be Hibiscus Coast, Otahuhu, Richmond and Otara; as it happens, they were all junior clubs for existing Vodafone Warriors. Shaun Johnson started out with Hibiscus Coast, Manu Vatuvei and Sam Lisone with Otara, Roger Tuivasa-Sheck with Otahuhu and James Gavet with Richmond. The mini mod games are a way of giving young kids a special game day experience and also giving back to the grass roots rugby league community.

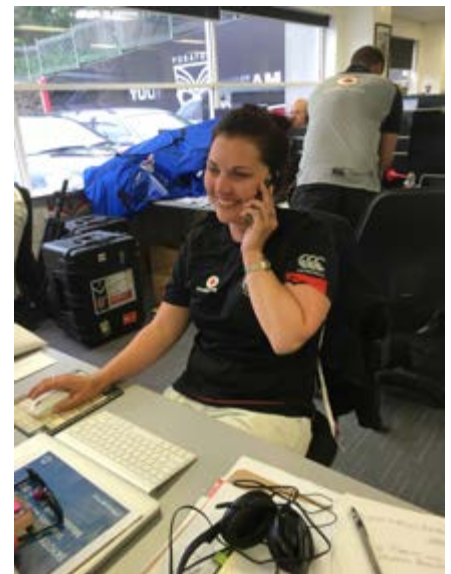
Bianca says last year's biggest game day theme was a 'Zombie Night', which all staff got involved in roaming around the stadium giving away items like two-for-one movie vouchers, lollipops and other spot prizes. She likes to provide 'surprise and delight' moments for members and fans. Research has shown the Vodafone Warriors stacked up well compared to the other 15 NRL clubs with their game day packages last year but Bianca says the club is committed to further improvements.

"We ranked fourth on the list of 'most entertaining' among all clubs," she says.

"This was done through a voting system. While that was good we want to hit that number one spot this year."

The gates at Mount Smart Stadium open at 11.30am this Sunday with the first game of the day being the Intrust Super Premiership team's clash against Newtown at 11.45, followed by the NYC fixture against the Melbourne Storm at 1.45pm and then the big one when the Vodafone Warriors face the Storm in the NRL clash kicking off at 4.05pm.

The big message to supporters, though, is a simple one – get there early. Don't leave it late.



*Bianca hard at work.*



# Sean Hoppe's Keeping the Faith After All These Years

By John Deaker



**T**HERE'S NOT many rugby league fans who were around watching the sport during the Warriors' inaugural year who don't have fond memories of Sean Hoppe. Hoppe was one of the standout members of that 1995 Warriors team and was also voted the competition's best winger.

These days Hoppe still loves rugby league as much as ever and despite making his name at the Canberra club it's his connection to the Warriors that is the strongest NRL connection he retains. This passion for the club that he played 88 first-grade games for led to him driving over four hours to watch the Warriors take on Brisbane last week.

Home for Hoppe most of the last decade has been Bundaberg in North Queensland. He settled there after he returned to Australia in 2002 when his career had wrapped up with St Helens. "My mother-in-law was living there and we ended up moving back there from England to live there because of the climate... it's just a big country town ... I think the population's only about 80 to 100,000," says the man who scored 17 tries in his 35 matches for the Kiwis.

Hoppe drove down to the game with his 13 year old son ( whose favourite player is Shaun Johnson ) who's main winter sport involves the round ball - football. He also plays futsal and touch over the summer, where he showcases some of the pace that helped make Hoppe such a Legend of New Zealand rugby league.

"He's fast. It surprised me when I went and watched his first touch game. This is his second season of touch and he got the top try-scorer."

During his time based in Bundaberg, Hoppe dabbled in coaching for a few years as well as refereeing. His long hours working in construction - many of them out of town - have sadly meant he's been unable to continue those involvements with grassroots rugby league.

His latest job has been two hours north of Bundaberg in Gladstone. He was always someone renowned for staying in great shape during his playing career - and that hasn't changed as he's continued to hit the gym regularly despite the physical demands of his job.

"It's like a disease - I can't shake it," he says.

"Working up in Gladstone I had to be up at 3.30 and be at the gym at 4, then catch a ferry to work and get home about 7 o'clock at night and then do it all again the next day."

Hoppe is excited about the Warriors having Roger Tuivasa-Sheck on board in 2016. His elusive style of play reminds the 45 year-old of one of the most formidable opponents from his playing days.

"He reminds me of Jason Robinson... I'd say he was the hardest winger I ever marked - not physically - but you just didn't know what he was going to do when you marked him he was so hard. And a lovely guy too. Wendall was good and I played against Hancock and Carne, but Jason Robinson I dreaded marking."

Despite the great time he had with the Warriors you can sense frustration in Hoppe's voice more than 20 years later with the way his move to the Warriors ended up landing him at North Sydney for the 1994 season - therefore denying him the chance to play in the magnificent Canberra team that won the Premiership in 1994.

"I thought it was OK signing with the Warriors for the following season of 1995 but when the Raiders found out I'd signed with them in early 1994, Tim Sheens made the call - we had Ken Nagas coming through in reserve grade and he was very good," he reflects.

It might not have been the result they drove 4 hours for at the weekend, but with the type of commitment to the cause that Hoppe and his son showed at the weekend there's no doubt they'll be keeping their faith in the Warriors in the future regardless of whether the team is winning or not.



*From left to right. Shontayne Hape, Sean Hoppe's son and Sean Hoppe.*

# Refugee for Frustrated Fans

By John Coffey QSM



**A**NYONE SEEKING a refuge from future March-time Warriors Wobbles could do a lot worse than head for Tasmania. Despite Tassie being an Australian Rules stronghold it was easy to find NRL coverage on Fox Sports and/or Channel Nine during the last two weeks, without having the hassle of being asked the perennial early-season question, “What’s Wrong With The Warriors?”

The AFL is still involved in a low-profile pre-season competition and I had no problem tuning into NRL coverage at motels from Launceston to Hobart. Some had access via Fox Sports to all eight matches in the first two rounds. The Wrest Point Casino in Hobart even offered to set me up with a television of my own had my motel not been equipped with Fox Sports for the opening clash against Wests Tigers!

So you can gather that they are friendly folk in Tassie, a state which is developing a booming tourist industry but has not yet been over-run by outsiders. It is ideally sized for landing at Hobart or Launceston and hiring a car to do a lap of the island. We took 12 days to complete the circuit and saw just about everything but another week would have been welcomed when it was time to come home.

Obviously, the Warriors have been slow starters again, and generally disappointing. On the Sunday Footy Show Andrew Johns listed Roger Tuivasa-Sheck and Shaun Johnson as the two most brilliant steppers in the game, yet precious little has been seen of that. Issac Luke has yet to get into gear and aspects of the team’s defence have been dreadful. But there was an improvement in attitude against the Broncos.

Unlike me, you have also heard and read the inevitable backlash within New Zealand. Over in Tasmania no-one could have cared less about the Warriors, though there was a small knot of visitors from the Australian mainland watching other NRL games at the casino. I wore a Warriors cap on most days and am absolutely sure none of the locals recognised what club or sport it supported.

But the Tasmanians are as enthusiastic about their sport as any other Aussies. I’m sure the AFL will dominate the TV sports prime time airwaves once their premiership gets under way at Easter. Although without a home-based team in the AFL competition, they all have their favourite clubs. Both Hawthorn

and North Melbourne play two “home” games in Launceston and Hobart each season.

Each town has its sports oval, conveniently suitable for cricket and Aussie Rules. The most remarkable oval is Queenstown’s unique gravel field. A cushion of sand is overlaid and there are no sharp stones. But it must feel like playing on sandpaper. A tiny antique grandstand sits on one boundary, with the scoreboard and “can bar” on the other side. A couple of blokes were marking the field in preparation for the footy season when we were there.

This Queenstown is nothing like our tourist mecca. It is an old copper mining town surrounded by an unreal “moonscape” which can be viewed from a look-out platform above an abandoned open cast mine. The mines have closed (and most of the pubs, too, now the miners have gone). But there is an excellent vintage hotel and restaurant, and a steam train to coastal Strachan, where one can cruise Macquarie Harbour out through Hells Gate into the Roaring Forties, and visit the ruins of convict penal colonies.

But there are many similarities to New Zealand’s South Island. The west coast is wet, the east coast dry, and they are separated by mountains and forests. Our temperatures are about on a par. Tasmania is steeped in history, from Port Arthur’s notorious penal settlement to the well-preserved buildings in the two major cities and many quaint villages. Walking tracks abound in the bush.

The major sports stadium is Bellerive Oval in Hobart, a Test cricket and Aussie Rules venue. The Tasmanian cricket team was engaged in a Sheffield Shield match against NSW when we dropped by. Capacity is 16,200 and the concrete stands blend with a traditional grassed bank where one can picnic at the cricket.

For those who stop short of Tasmania but are heading to Melbourne for the Warriors’ Anzac Day clash with the Storm, I would recommend spending a few hours at the MCG Sports Museum. While there is plenty of unfamiliar Aussie Rules history, cricket and the Olympic Games are richly treated and there are smaller sections on the rugby codes and other sports.

# Ali Kicks off The Season With a Try and a Huge Win

By John Deaker



**T**HERE WERE many positives that the Warriors club can be take out of their NSW Cup team's 44-6 thrashing of Wests Tigers on Saturday. One of the features undoubtedly was seeing Ali Lauitiiti turning out in the club's colours for the first time in a competition game since 2004.

Not only did Ali touch down for a try, he also played a large amount of game time – especially when you compare his contribution to the role of an impact player that he's often been limited to in the twilight of his career.

"I started the match and played about 60 minutes. I really enjoyed playing with the young boys and feeding off their energy," he says.

Getting up to speed during a limited pre-season was challenging for the giant second-rower because it wasn't till late in 2015 that he signed on with the Warriors. He also had to deal with an injury that kept him out of the Auckland Nines.

"The boys did about 17 weeks ( pre-season ) and I didn't even do half that. I came in late after most of the hard stuff. So it's been tough for me trying to find my feet."

As Ali continues with his progress he could soon feature for the NRL and less for the NSW Cup team where he is enjoying playing under his former team-mate, Stacey Jones. The difficult situation regarding the uncertainty of who'll be available for them each week is something Ali is very accepting of.

"It's just the way it is – it's always going to be like that because you don't know who's playing for the top team and because of injuries. You just have to deal with it," he says.

Konrad Hurrell is one individual who's floating between the NRL and NSW Cup teams at the moment. He's initially been named on an extended bench this week to cover for Blake Ayshford who got concussed at the weekend. This comes off the back of a strong game alongside Ali at the weekend.

"He played 80 minutes and played really well. He made himself known and was always coming in and getting involved and talking a lot," Ali says of Hurrell's performance.

Ali's return to the Warriors comes off the back of him spending more than a decade in England playing for the Leeds Rhinos and Wakefield Trinity. Having his family back in New Zealand has been great he says.

"They're really enjoying it. The kids have settled down at school. It's been a good time – especially seeing family more. And with the weather good they've been getting in to swimming."

This Sunday the NSW Cup team take on the Newtown Jets ( who also had a win in round one - beating Newcastle 28-20 ) at Mt Smart Stadium at 11.45.



*Ali Lauitiiti during a training session.*

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



# Ray White New Zealand Joins the Warriors Family

**R**AY WHITE New Zealand last week announced that they have joined the Vodafone Warriors family as an official sponsor.

On Monday evening last week, Carey Smith, Chief Executive of Ray White New Zealand, welcomed Sir Peter Leitch; Jim Doyle, Chief Executive of the Vodafone Warriors; Ryan Hoffman, Captain of the Vodafone Warriors together with significant members of the Ray White New Zealand leadership team to join together for the announcement of the sponsorship.

In a relaxed environment, the announcement of the sponsorship was made on behalf of Ray White. Carey Smith, Chief Executive of Ray white New Zealand, thanked Jim Doyle together with Sir Peter Leitch for the opportunity to be part of the Vodafone Warriors. He said it was significant that Ray White looked upon this opportunity as a company that shares family values that are similar to the Vodafone Warriors.

Ray White also have a long-standing partnership with Ronald McDonald House and Sir Peter Leitch spoke on the synergies between the Vodafone Warriors and Ray White and how helping members of the community, particularly in Ronald McDonald House, was another reason to celebrate the newly formed partnership.

Jim Doyle spoke broadly about the ambitions of the Vodafone Warriors and their plans for 2016. Ryan Hoffman, Captain of the Vodafone Warriors commented on behalf of the 2016 playing group that it was great to have Ray White on board to assist in the financial understanding of property and this will provide access for players, members and partners of the Vodafone Warriors knowledge that they would normally not be directly given.

A feature of the Ray White sponsorship is the NRL Ray White Coin Toss, which all Vodafone Warriors members have the opportunity to be part of.

The Ray White Group has the largest network of residential real estate offices throughout Auckland and has 145 offices covering New Zealand.

## Ray White.



Jim Doyle - Managing Director of Vodafone Warriors, Carey Smith - Chief Executive of Ray White New Zealand, Wayne Howett - CEO of Ronald McDonald House Charities New Zealand, Ryan Hoffman and Sir Peter Leitch.



Jim Doyle - Managing Director of Vodafone Warriors, Ryan Hoffman - Vodafone Warriors Captain.



Ryan Hoffman gets the Butcher laughing.

## Ray White.



Sir Peter Leitch.



Ryan Hoffman talks to Sir Peter about the BBQ at Ryan's place.

# It's Been a Busy Few Weeks

## By Shontayne Hape



**WE ARE** nearly three weeks into the NRL season and the time has arrived for the Vodafone Warriors to run out at Mt Smart Stadium for their first home game.

I was lucky enough to travel to both Sydney and Brisbane for our first two regular season games and while we didn't get the results we wanted, it was still fantastic to rub shoulders with our loyal members.

This weekend we take on arch rivals, the Melbourne Storm, in what is sure to be a cracker. Matches between these two teams are never dull. Who can forget Nathan Friend's amazing flip pass during last year's win right here at Mt Smart Stadium in round 18 or Shaun Johnson's amazing try?

On the membership front, it's been a busy month. That membership number is ticking up every day, which is pleasing, and we are working hard here at Vodafone Warriors HQ to get everything ready in time for game day.

This Sunday, I'll be setting up a membership marquee out the front of Gate B where I'll be answering any queries and meeting our members.

It'll be a fantastic occasion, no doubt. I'm looking forward to seeing you there. If you haven't got your membership sorted yet, get in quick before it's too late!

Go the mighty Vodafone Warriors.



*Awesome fans at our away games.*

## The Vodafone Warriors in Brisbane

*Thanks to the Vodafone Warriors Digital Media Assistant, Ra, for the photos.*





# Signed Vodafone Warriors Jersey Winners

- Alison DelaRue - Warkworth Auckland
- Callaghan - Mt Roskill Auckland
- Kristin Tauroa - Turangi
- Tom Jones - Tapanu South Island
- Mark Campbell - Te Atatu Sth Auckland
- Tyler Blake - Albany Auckland
- Ray Greaves - Glen Eden Auckland
- Bruce Pert - Mt Eden Auckland
- Tony Coll - Greymouth
- Matt White - Christchurch



4 x Consolation prizes of a 2016 Auckland 9's memorabilia top to;

- Kurt Seymour - Queensland Australia
- R Jones - Blenheim
- Aroha Phillips - Napier
- Hayley Cournane - Whangarei



**Winners: send us a pic of you and your jersey to:** [pcleitch@xtra.co.nz](mailto:pcleitch@xtra.co.nz)



Former athlete and politician Les Mills pictured outside the service in Auckland

**Check this out...**The Daily Mail accidentally called my mate Murray Deaker, Les Mills in it's coverage of Martin Crowe's funeral.



# In the Coaching Den



Stacey Jones - NSW Cup Coach and Ricky Henry - Assistant Coach just finished a team meeting after the great win over the Tigers last weekend.



Tony Iro -Recruitment and Development Manager and Kelvin Wright - NYC Coach discussing the U20s team for this weekend.

Wyong 24 - Mounties 18

Penrith 42 - North Sydney 10

Illawarra 38 - Canterbury 12

New Zealand 44 - Wests Tigers 6

Newtown 28 - Newcastle 20

Wentworthville 28 - Manly 0

## NSW Intrust Super Premiership Round 2 Results



**I wanted to share an interview with you all.** Tony Veitch interviewed Jim Doyle on Sunday the 13th on Radio Sport. I thought Jim was fantastic. You can check it out on my website: [www.sirpeterleitch.co.nz](http://www.sirpeterleitch.co.nz)



Membership Services



[www.warriors.kiwi](http://www.warriors.kiwi)

VODAFONE



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EXPERIENCE**

NRL coin toss  
Guard of honour  
Post match gym visit







## Become a Vodafone Warrior for a Day

**H**ERE'S A fantastic opportunity for all kids who just love the Vodafone Warriors.

It's a footy clinic the Vodafone Warriors will run during the school holidays in late April, giving 7-13 year olds the chance to experience a day in the life of a Vodafone Warrior.

From today (March 14) until next Monday (March 21), Vodafone Warriors members (paid up fans) have priority booking access to register participants for the one-day clinic run on three consecutive days.

The first holiday programme run by the club will feature a range of activities which will put young fans in the shoes of world-class rugby league stars. As well as being shown around Mount Smart Stadium and the club's facilities, they'll train like a Vodafone Warrior and meet the players.

Participants should bring a healthy lunch, a big drink of water, a hat, a can-do attitude and wear as much Vodafone Warriors gear as possible.

- Bookings are available for Tuesday, April 26, Wednesday, April 27 and Thursday, April 28; the same programme is run each day beginning at 9.00am and running through to 3.00pm.
- Booking forms must be completed and returned with a participant consent form.
- By returning the completed booking form and participant consent form, parents/guardians agree to the terms and conditions as laid out in the parent confirmation letter.

[Consent Form: Click here](#)

[Book Form: Click here](#)

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VS  
Saturday March 19th  
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# Vete and Gubb Back for First Home Game

by Richard Becht



**F**ront rowers Albert Vete and Charlie Gubb will make their first NRL appearances of the season for the Vodafone Warriors in their highly-anticipated third-round clash against Melbourne at Mount Smart Stadium on Sunday (4.00pm kick-off; match day sponsor: Vodafone).

The contest, the club's first home game of the year after back-to-back away trips, will be the third leg of a tripleheader starting with the Intrust Super Premiership clash between the Vodafone Warriors and Newtown (11.45am kick-off) followed by the NYC encounter between the Vodafone Junior Warriors and the Storm (1.45pm kick-off).

Gubb comes onto the bench for his 16th career appearance after serving a suspension hanging over from late last year while 2015 NRL rookie Vete, who played for the ISP side in their 44-6 win against Wests Tigers last Saturday, will appear in his 22nd game replacing the injured Sam Lisone (shoulder).

"While Charlie has been sidelined he was able to play in our trials and has been training the place down," said Vodafone Warriors head coach Andrew McFadden.

"He's a special person who brings so much enthusiasm and energy to the side.

"Albie was really impressive for our reserves last week, played some big minutes and has earned the chance to come onto the interchange.

"It gives us three front rowers on the bench along with James Gavet. It's quite a balance getting it right with the interchange now but we have three back rowers who are all 80-minutes players while Ben (Matulino) can play a lot of time as well."

Matulino has been named after the club indicated it will defend a grade one shoulder charge he landed after the Vodafone Warriors' 10-25 loss to Brisbane

last Friday night.

Also listed are experienced wing Manu Vatuvei (ribs) and centre Blake Ayshford (concussion). McFadden is hopeful both will be cleared to play but he has named Jonathan Wright and Konrad Hurrell as cover on an extended bench which also includes back rower John Palavi.

The Vodafone Warriors will be defending the Michael Moore Trophy they reclaimed in a memorable 28-14 victory at Mount Smart Stadium in July last year.

Front rower Jacob Lillyman this week moves within two appearances of his 150th NRL appearance for the club when he makes his 148th appearance (his 210th overall).

This will be the 37th clash between the sides with little separating them since their first meeting in 1998. The Vodafone Warriors have 16 wins, Melbourne 18, with two drawn.

In the 17 encounters at Mount Smart Stadium, the Vodafone Warriors have a 9-8 edge.



## Team:

- 1 Roger TUIVASA-SHECK
- 2 Tuimoala LOLOHEA
- 3 Blake AYSHFORD
- 4 Solomone KATA
- 5 Manu VATUVEI
- 6 Shaun JOHNSON
- 7 Jeff ROBSON
- 8 Jacob Lillyman
- 9 Issac LUKE
- 10 Ben MATULINO
- 11 Bodene THOMPSON
- 12 Ryan HOFFMAN (C)
- 13 Simon MANNERING

## Interchange

- 14 Nathaniel ROACHE
- 15 Charlie GUBB
- 16 James GAVET
- 17 Albert VETE
- 18 John PALAVI
- 21 Jonathan WRIGHT
- 23 Konrad HURRELL

# Warriors v Storm - Match Day Info

**THIS SUNDAY Sunday March 20**

## KEY TIMINGS

Gates Open: 11:30am

NSW Cup Kick-off: 11:45am

NYC Kick-off: 1:45pm

NRL Kick-off: 4:00pm

SKYCITY Meet the Team, Andy's Burger Bar, Level 2, SKYCITY 7pm – 8pm. All ages welcome.

[Get you tickets NOW!](#)

This season the NRL playing squad will come out wearing an exclusive t-shirt. 4 of them will be fired into the crowd at 3:40pm. The winners, as well as getting to keep the t-shirt will be able to meet the team in the gym post match (for you and a friend).

## MATCH DAY SPONSOR

Vodafone

## HALFTIME

VodaDrone – The Vodadrone will fly around the field at half time shooting red prize packs into the crowd. Make sure you stay in your seat!

## HARVEY NORMAN COMMUNITY FUN ZONE

Passing Wall

Face painting

Photo booth open // 3:30 – 4:45 // Get your photo taken with Vodafone Warriors Players from 3:30 – 3:45

Panasonic Washing Machine Competition // Guess how many jersey's can fit into the washing machine for your chance to win the Panasonic Washing Machine this week!

## CORPORATE LOUNGE

## GUEST SPEAKERS

Lance Hohaia

Tony Veitch Broadcasting Live

[Corporate hospitality available HERE!](#)

Stacey Jones Lounge: Plenty of laughs courtesy of Sir Peter Leitch

## Round Three Match Officials

### Vodafone Warriors v Storm - NRL

Referee: Henry Perenara

Assist Referee: Dave Munro

Touch Judges: Jason Walsh & Anthony Elliott

Review Officials: Ben Galea & Matt Cecchin

Senior Ro: Luke Patten

### Vodafone Warriors v Storm - Holden Cup

Referee: Ziggy Przeklasa-Adamski

Assist Referee: Tim Roby

Touch Judges: Kena Waikai & Chris McMillan



# Emails from Readers

Hi Peter,

**S**OME TIME ago you sent me a mad butcher doll and I thought you'd like to see where it is these days.

It has pride of place in the Sky Sports RL edit suite in Manchester, keeping an eye on Ben the producer and Mick the editor as they put together another edition of Super League Full Time, presented by the legendary Bill Arthur!

We've got the talking Mad Butcher doll somewhere too - now that is scary! It could probably do a better job than the current presenter.

All the best, Bill.



Dear Sir Peter,

Thank you for delivering my Official NRL 2016 Season Guide to my home.

It was well worth my \$13 and I was also very happy to receive an additional Vodafone Warriors 2016 Rugby League Guide, a 2016 Vodafone Warriors team poster and a NZRL League 4 Life Sticker!

Regards,

Te Haua Taua



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



Facebook



Instagram



Twitter



**Nev Hinga - Vodafone Warriors Member #63570**

Warrior Supporter since the beginning ('95). Caught up with Sean Hoppe (Warrior number 3) and Shontayne Hape (Warrior number 80) at the Broncos game. He is as loyal as the Butcher!



Former Warrior Francis Meli (warrior no 65) now works as a HENDERSON Police youth worker. Former Warrior Duane Mann (warrior no 9) Academy Manager at the Warriors

If you wish to **subscribe** or **unsubscribe** please email Stephan Maier at [stephan.maier@medstar.co.nz](mailto:stephan.maier@medstar.co.nz)

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Without the help of these brands the Mad Butcher 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  
**Colin MacKenzie** - Assistant Editor  
**Hayden Woodhead** - Graphic Designer  
**Stephan Maier** - Distribution

**John Deaker** - Correspondent  
**John Coffey** - Southern Correspondent  
**Barry Ross** - Australian Correspondent  
**Ben Francis** - Northern Correspondent  
**John Holloway** - Correspondent  
**Lee Umbers** - Correspondent