

VODAFONE



Sir Peter Leitch Club

AT MT SMART STADIUM, HOME OF THE MIGHTY VODAFONE WARRIORS

Newsletter

31 March 2016

#115

We Win and I Missed It!

By David Kemeys



A SEVEN TRY blitz over Newcastle.
Our first win of the 2016 NRL season.

Our first win in four games of the new season.

Our first win in 11 games after losing eight straight to end 2015.

Issac Luke makes his home debut, scoring a nifty try from dummy-half.

It is finally all smiles after months and months of misery, but I tell you what, this league can be a cruel game.

I was not there, I did not soak in the atmosphere, enjoy the rising pleasure of the crowd, cheer the boys on or even celebrate wildly at the final whistle.

Instead I sat at home in front of the TV, and let me tell you, it is not the same.

This is all because I walked the dog.

Well, blaming the dog is a bit much really. I walked her down the side of the little creek up the way from my place and got stung in the face by a wasp for my trouble.

Let me tell you, it hurts. A lot.

I soon had a swelling on the side of my face the size of a Steeden, and there was debate in my house about whether I needed to be one of those bludgers who turn up at the A and E Department for the slightest injury.

I was not having it, so made do with endless ice-packs to suppress the swelling, which by this time was bloody painful, but on the plus-side, a huge source of amusement to the family.

So this is the shortest league column in history, as I compare myself to men who actually put their bodies on the line all the time.

Casualty ward: Thomas Leuluai (ACL), Henare Wells (hamstring), Ligi Sao (shoulder), Ben Henry (knee), Sam Lisone (shoulder), Nathaniel Roache (ankle), Bodene Thompso (ribs), David Kemeys (Wasp sting).



That wasp got the better of me!

We Finally Win One!

WELL WE finally beat the losing hoodoo, the Vodafone Warriors crushing the Newcastle Knights 40-18 at Mt Smart to make my Easter.

It was our first win of the NRL season after three straight losses, and the eight that ended the previous campaign, so had we lost, it would have been the club's worst-ever losing streak, and I would be licking my wounds.

I can't begin to imagine the pressure our coach Andrew McFadden must have been feeling, because what coach wants that statistic on their record?

But surprisingly, he was not cock-a-hoop after the game. It was a huge privilege to be invited into the dressing room after the match to sing the club's winning song, and I had expected the man they call Cappy to be full of beans and grinning from ear to ear.

In fact my great mate Dexter, who is doing the stadium tours for us, bumped into Cappy and he told him: "Tell the Butcher I want him in the sheds to sing the winning song". Dexter asked if he had told me, and Cappy just said: "No, but tell him to be there."

So I was very humbled by that and surprised to find he was actually disappointed, concerned we had not played that well in patches, and cautioning everyone that there was a lot of hard work to do.

While you could have been forgiven for thinking none of that would matter, to McFadden it was a win, but one achieved despite not playing as well, he said, as we had in our two losses to Melbourne and Brisbane.

Newcastle Knights v Vodafone Warriors

Photos courtesy of www.photosport.co.nz



The boys run onto the field.



Dedicated fans at the game to support the boys.



Ryan Hoffman during the game.



Issac Luke celebrates his try.



Issac Luke on the run.



Manu Vatuvei celebrates his try.

Crowd Should Have Been Better

For me the disappointment of the day came more in a smaller crowd than I would have like to see. Sure I understand that we have not been going well, but it always depresses me when the crowd falls off like that. Support through thick and thin I say.

But I am one for taking the positives, and I will happily take the win, and also celebrate seeing Konrad Hurrell's return to the field. The crowd noise went up a level when he came out, indicating that like me, the Mt Smart faithful, are massive fans of the Hurrell-Cane.

And it was real boost to get Manu Vatuvei back from his rib injury. He was fantastic carrying the ball out of defence, and livewire hooker Issac Luke returned too, ahead of schedule, and grabbed a try.

Roger Tuivasa-Sheck was again impressive at fullback and I thought the forward pack lifted really well and put in a solid eighty minutes.

Dare We Dream?

Perhaps, just perhaps, we have reason to believe that all of those who said it was not all doom and gloom might be right.

I certainly hope so because this weekend we are away in Australia to play the Roosters, and they are without a win yet this season.

It shows that spectacular declines can happen in any team. Very few would have predicted that the much-vaunted Roosters would be struggling as badly as they are, but the Vodafone Warriors will be all too aware of what that feels like.

A poor performance will totally undo the good work of the win on Monday, and will boost the Roosters. A good performance, and hopefully a win, will create some momentum for us ahead of the following weekend's match, when Manly come to town.

Interestingly, no side that has beaten Newcastle this year has won their next match, so maybe it is time, having shaken the losing hoodoo, we put an end to that hoodoo too.

What A Timely Boost

As I just said, Manu Vatuvei and Issac Luke gave us a huge boost ahead of the game, passing fitness tests. They both came through the final training and I could not have been more pleased.

Manu was forced off with a rib problem after 47 minutes of the second-round game against the Broncos, side-lining him for the Melbourne match. He wasn't chosen earlier in the week but having him back was massive for us, and his try in the corner showed what we have been missing.

Luke was poised to make his home debut against Melbourne only to be ruled out with a leg injury he picked up in the final field session the previous day. Luke was also left out of the original side but got the all-clear for his belated first home appearance, game 191 of his career.

He dived over for a try too, reinforcing how critical he is to us.

And consider this, Vatuvei and Luke added a combined total of more than 400 NRL appearances to the side.

That is experience you just can't afford to lose.

Two Back But One Out

While we got Manu and Issac back, we did lose second rower Bodene Thompson. He picked up a rib complaint and was withdrawn. Happily, it is only a short-term problem, and I say happily, because I think Thompson has been outstanding.

Happily, it is only a short-term problem, and I say happily, because I think Thompson has been outstanding.

A Wonderful Boost

On Tuesday I had to go into hospital for a bit of a check-up and it was superb to be given the all clear. But as I lay on my bed resting after the test the old mobile rang and it was none other than former Kiwi and Vodafone Warrior Motu Tony ringing for a FaceTime catch-up.

I could not have been more chuffed. Motu is the big boss at Hull in England now, and he had Frank Pritchard with him, and Iafeta Paleassina too.

I am close to Iafeta after his time with the club, and of course Motu and Frank were both in the 2005 Kiwis side that won the Tri-Nations when I was manager.

I think it says a lot about them as men that they took time, knowing I was going to be in hospital, to get in touch.

I was genuinely moved and grateful that they were thinking of me.

Club Marks Lilyman Milestone

The downside of being laid up in bed on Tuesday was that I missed the lunch the club hosted to mark the 150 NRL games Jacob Lilyman now has against his name.

Congratulations Jake from all of us at the Mad Butcher Club.

Jake is a great young man, who is taking to fatherhood like a duck to water I might add.

It is hard to reconcile the gentle nature of the man off the pitch to the man they call Bull.

But it is an outstanding achievement and one well worth marking.

Lillyman becomes just the 11th player to make 150 NRL appearances for the Vodafone Warriors when he fronts the Roosters in Sunday's fifth-round encounter at Central Coast Stadium.

While Lillyman prepares for a special moment in his eighth season since joining the club in 2009, fullback Roger Tuivasa-Sheck faces one in his debut campaign, when he comes up against his old Roosters side for the first time.

Five Try Blitz Made Me Smile

You score so early in the first half that the tomato sauce on your hotdog hasn't even spilled down your shirt yet, then you end up in an arm-wrestle and only claw your way back to even-stevens on the buzzer of half-time, and you can be left thinking: "Oh, no, not more of the same."

So the five-try second half blitz we turned on really had me smiling.

Blake Ayshford, Tuimoala Lolohea, Manu Vatuvei, Shaun Johnson and Issac Luke blasted us home.

The early signs suggested something special when Solomone Kata got his fourth try of the season, and then Manu Vatuvei crossed.

But The Bunker found a reason not to award it, and instead Newcastle enjoyed a good phase with tries to Sam Mataora and Dane Gagai.

To be fair, we were not really going as well as we all wanted and you feel the mood darkening, and perhaps that is understandable given our recent run.

That mood did not get any better when Lolohea went over but The Bunker again decided against us. The ruling was obstruction, and a second try was ruled out. The crowd was not happy, to say the least, and there were the usual mutterings about how often decisions go upstairs for us, and against us when they do.

Step up Charlie Gubb – who must be, next to me, the most popular man at Mt Smart.

Continued on next page...

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The crowd loves the bloke, and he showed magnificent hands to feed Ben Matulino, who forced his way in near the sticks to restore parity.

I do not know what Cappy had to say at halftime, but I hope he recorded it, because we came out all guns blazing, stinging defence and aggressive carries leading to a last tackle try two minutes into the half when Ayshford got his first try in our colours.

It got even better when Lolohea finally got over for one the officials couldn't rule out, and we got a third try in the space of nine minutes when a bomb saw the ball shipped right across the field to Vatuvei to scatter defenders in a trademark finish.

By the way – that was try No 147 of his career.

The much under fire Johnson reminded us all what we have been missing, shooting across the field on a weaving run to score in the corner.

Our fifth try of the half was hugely popular, when Luke shot over from dummy half.

We let in one late, but by that time no one cared.

Intrust Super Premiers Downed

The Vodafone Warriors paid for a poor first half going down 36-20 to Wyong in the Intrust Super Premiership at Mt Smart.

The Roos led 36-0 at halftime, and if anyone thinks there is a way back from there, they are dreaming.

The Vodafone Warriors won the second half 20-0 but there are no prizes for that.

Wyong feasted on a rash of errors and penalties to take total control in the opening 40.

The score kept climbing in increments of six, and the harder we tried the worse we got, but we were a different side in the second 40.

Our defence had sting, there was intensity in the carry and a sense of urgency in attitude.

Eventually prop Upu Poching scored under the bar and Ken Maumalo crossed in the corner and the gap was down to 36-12.

Maumalo went in again, and completed his hat-trick on fulltime, but really Wyong deserved to win this one.

Vodafone Warriors coach Stacey Jones lamented the first half performance but felt the second half effort atoned for it to some degree, especially the defensive intensity.

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Juniors Beaten

Newcastle closed out the Vodafone Junior Warriors 26-12 at Mt Smart.

There was little in it at halftime when the Knights led 12-8 but they did enough in the second spell to bag their second win of the season and leave us with a 1-3 record.

Three dummy half tries opened proceedings, Newcastle the first to strike after the Knights enjoyed a lot of possession.

Absorbing defensive pressure, we turned the tide, hooker Chris Sio scooting from dummy half to tie it up 6-6.

Our goal-line defence faltered, Newcastle snatching the lead, before the rest of the half became an arm wrestle.

We had our chances but a high error count did not help, the Knights getting a third try to go eight points clear.

The Junior Warriors gave themselves a chance when they closed to 20-12, but they couldn't organise another hit-back, the Knights putting the result out of reach with their fourth try.

Jnr Newcastle Knights v Jnr Vodafone Warriors

Photos courtesy of www.photosport.co.nz



Jerome Mamea on the attack.



Lewis Soosemea scores a try.

We Are Even In Wales...

International league will be held in Llanelli for the first time in 16 years when Wales hosts Serbia in a Rugby League World Cup qualifying match on October 15 at Parc Stebonheath. The last time Wales appeared there was in the 2000 Rugby League World Cup when they beat Lebanon 24-22.

And Hungary....

Hungary won the 2016 Czech 9s tournament held in Chrudim. The event featured eight teams from the Czech Republic, Hungary and Poland; the Magyars defeating Krupka 10-4 in the final.

Newtown def Manly-Warringah 20
Wests Tigers def Canterbury 14
Mounties 18 def North Sydney 16
Wyong Roos 36 def Warriors 20
Illawarra Cutters 46 def
Penrith Panthers 18
Newcastle Knights 22 def
Wentworthville Magpies 14

NSW Intrust Super Premiership Round 4 Results





Allan Jackson current Kiwi Ferns coach who played 50 games for Taranaki.



Colin Parris doing an impersonation of Dads Army Jonesy.



Gordon Surteesm, Sir Peter's gardener and caretaker on Waiheke Island.



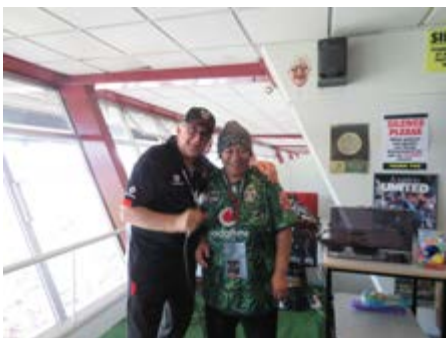
Musician and Composer Graeme Revell (check him out online to see what movie soundtracks he's made).



Wayne Norton from Aussie performing with Guy Cater hypnotist and comedian.



Former Kiwi Howie Tamati with Sir Peter.



Joyce a staunch supporter and a loyal club member with Sir Peter.



Mason Lino with Sir Peter.



Toafofoa Siplely currently playing for the NSW Cup side with Sir Peter Leitch.



Ruth Wynn Williams (TVNZ Australian correspondent) and Matt Gibb (part-time TV host on TVNZ) with Sir Peter.



Luck to have club and league legend Stacy Jones in the lounge.



The Aussie group, great guys.

CAPPY: "IT'S A WIN. WE'RE NOT GETTING CARRIED AWAY WITH IT."

By John Deaker



THE VODAFONE Warriors' coach Andrew McFadden hasn't shied away from the importance of getting their first win of the year on Monday against Newcastle but he was careful to point out that the 40-18 victory wasn't achieved in anything like the style he'd hoped for.

Reflecting post-match, McFadden said he was much happier with the second half performance having gone into the sheds all tied up at 12-all after the first 40 minutes.

"It's a win. [But] We're not getting carried away with it. I thought we performed better last week and lost so we'll address this game like any other. We'll have a look at the performance and we'll see where we can improve and build on it," McFadden said.

After 11 loses in a row, the value of getting a win regardless of the quality of their overall performance wasn't lost on McFadden.

"I know that it's an important game for us because we've got that monkey off our back. And we needed to get some confidence in our game and you saw that in the second half," he said.

McFadden was clear who he thought had been the standout player for the Warriors.

"I thought Manu was probably our best today. He really led the way and gave us the platform we needed in the second half."

He also made mention of a huge play getting out of the on-goal by Solomone Kata five minutes before halftime that Manu then took advantage of and eventually led to the Warriors tying up the match a few minutes later.

"I think Solomone and Manu got us out of trouble many times in the first half. It was huge. Those sorts of efforts can turn a game for you and off the back of it Manu ran 15 or 16 metres."

The match was also significant for being Ryan Hoffman's first victory in a competition game since taking over the captaincy from Simon Mannering. Hoffman reflected post-match on a much improved performance in the second half following what he described as a "Very Loud" rev up by McFadden.

"In the first half we weren't clinical in what we were doing and we needed to simplify ourselves at the

start of the second half," Hoffman said.

"They were kicking the ball from their 20 and Roger was catching it from the halfway. That makes things a hell of a lot easier... It was good to see us execute and put some good points on the board."

Next up for the Warriors is an away match against the Sydney Roosters this Sunday.

JOHNSON STILL CAN'T RUN TOO MUCH

WITH 15 minutes to go in Monday's win over Newcastle Shaun Johnson did something all Warriors fans love to see – he ran the ball and didn't stop running (or bother passing or kicking) till he dotted down for a try. Often running sideways is frowned upon in rugby league, but for elusive players like Johnson and Roger Tuivasa-Sheck they often play their best when they play to their own rule-book. Here's hoping this try by Johnson was a sign of things to come as he continues to regain confidence from his injuries and adjusts to playing in the number 6 jersey with some different players around him.

Former Newcastle and NSW stand-off Matty John's said on Monday Night with Matty Johns (following the Newcastle victory) :

"Things start to happen for the Warriors when Shaun Johnson runs the football and that was the tale of the tape in this match."

Bryan Fletcher then added: "I don't know if he's back to his best but that's been his best game in the opening rounds."

Johnson had a bit of luck with his kicking game around the field on Monday – particularly late in the tackle count – and fine-tuning it appears to be a work-in-progress.



Shaun Johnson during the Knights game. Photo courtesy of www.photosport.nz

Gordon Gibbons - A Lifetime Involved with League

By John Deaker



AT VODAFONE Warriors' matches these days you'll find Gordon Gibbons hosting members in the club's Gold lounge in his role of Corporate Sales Manager. However, it is the very 'unincorporate' world of grassroots rugby league where Gibbons initially nurtured his love of league playing for the Manukau club as a five year old. Many decades later that led to him receiving a distinguished services award from New Zealand Rugby League last year.

Gibbons has given almost every role within rugby league a crack over the years. He played Premier rugby league for five years, refereed, coached, MC'd Warriors matches and worked for Auckland rugby league for eight years as their Manager of Football Operations. His involvement as part of the management of the Kiwis for 58 tests is a phenomenal achievement in its own right and one he is rightfully very proud of.

"My first tour with the team was to Papua New Guinea in 1994 so it was a baptism of fire and I never looked back," he says.

"I became the full manager in 2000... and in 2004 decided it was time to give it away."

Gibbons' 'comeback' as team manager in 2008 may not have captured the headlines that Allan Langer's successful comeback did with Queensland in 2001 but the rugby league legend Wayne Bennett's influence was just as crucial to Gibbons return to management as it was with Alfie's return to the playing fields down-under.

Initially Gibbons turned down the offer (to come out of managerial retirement) from New Zealand rugby league's General Manager Peter Cordtz. Gibbons and Bennett had previously had extensive contact with each other when Gibbons worked for Lion Nathan and it's a sign of the respect that Bennett had for Gibbons that the legendary coach was so keen to have him on board with the Kiwis.

" About half an hour later (after Cordtz had called) I got a call from Wayne Bennett telling me that I was the Kiwis' manager and we were having a meeting and I was expected to be there," Gibbons recalls.

" So he didn't give me an opportunity to say no – and of course the rest is history – we won the World Cup that year."

"I ended in 2009 because New Zealand rugby league wanted the manager to work for the NZRL – it was a bit disappointing but I understood."

Being involved in the Auckland and New Zealand league scene for so long has ensured Gibbons has become close friends with many prominent New Zealand league players including Ruben Wiki and Stacey Jones.

However, Gibbons is quick to emphasise that when acting in the role he's always been conscious of establishing boundaries because there are times he's had to make tough calls that haven't always put him on the players' Christmas card list.

"Yes you do have to have boundaries... It's your decisions that drive everything so if something goes wrong you're the one that gets it. So I've always worked on a philosophy that I'll always do anything for my players and they can feel that they can come to me at any hour of the day and confide in me and they've got my confidence. At the same time you have to make tough decisions and I've had to make a few. A couple of players have held resentment against me because of that."



Gordy hard at work.

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In his current role with the Vodafone Warriors Gibbons is conscious of providing a quality experience and not worrying too much about things outside his control such as the NRL team's results each week.

“When the people come here that have paid considerable money I have to ensure that their experience is of the highest caliber. That includes the environment we create in the lounges and corporate suites , the food and services received by the caterers and the quality of guests that I have in the lounge to entertain the clients that are in there. For my role I always look at the football as being secondary. First and foremost I need to make sure that people experience what they paid for and they'll come back - and their guests might come back in their own right too.”

Gibbons may spend plenty of time surrounded by the corporate world in his current role but he still continues to have a passion and appreciation for the game at the lower-levels. That led to him getting elected onto the board of directors for Auckland rugby league in January.

“I just love grass-roots rugby league so to be able to go back and offer something special to the clubs has been great and I'm really enjoying it.”

From Sir Peter Leitch: *I've had the pleasure of being Gordons assistant on several tours and am proud to call him a mate.*



Gordon Gibbons receives a Distinguished Service Award at the 2015 New Zealand Rugby League Awards. Photo courtesy of www.photosport.nz

A promotional advertisement for the Vodafone Warriors. It features five players in their black and red kit standing in a row. The text 'JOIN OUR TRIBE' is prominently displayed at the top. Below it, it says '3-game passes as low as | \$39'. At the bottom right, it says 'Become a member warriorsforever.co.nz' and '0800 839 839'. The Vodafone logo and the Warriors logo are also visible.

Webster Still a Match-Winner

By John Coffey QSM



JAKE WEBSTER, one of the heroes of New Zealand's 2005 Tri-Nations triumph, is still a match-winner with British club Castleford. The 32-year-old Webster scored two tries for the Tigers against Super League champion Leeds Rhinos at Castleford on Good Friday, the second of them clinching a thrilling and deserved 18-14 victory.

There was a time when the deeds of British-based Kiwis such as Dean Bell, James Leuluai, Dane O'Hara, Fred Ah Kuoi, Mark Broadhurst, Gary Prohm and Gordon Smith were well documented in this country. But they played in the pre-Super League era -- before the British switched to a summer season -- and could return home to extend their international careers.

Gone are the days when the likes of brothers Henry and Robbie Paul were expected to fly around the world, arrive in Australia on a Tuesday, line up against the Kangaroos three nights later and then make a hasty return trip to their British clubs. To play in the northern hemisphere now is to disqualify oneself from consideration for the Kiwis.

Webster is not alone in soldiering on out of sight and out of mind of his countrymen and would be the first to admit he is at a stage of his career where he is no longer a serious contender for Test selection. But, on the evidence of last Friday's televised match, he is certainly making the most of a one-season extension to his original Castleford contract.

Born in Melbourne of a New Zealand father and raised in Queensland, Webster's burgeoning talent as a centre was spotted by Melbourne scouts. He made 49 NRL appearances for the Storm from 2003 to 2006 before switching to the Titans for the Gold Coast club's inaugural season in 2007. It was during that period he made his significant contribution towards a proud milestone in Kiwis history.

New Kiwis coach Brian McClennan included Webster on the wing for the 2005 match which signalled their dual international debuts. The Kiwis spectacularly beat the Kangaroos 38-28 to achieve their first victory in Sydney for 46 years. In the return game at Auckland, Webster scored two tries in Australia's 28-26 victory. The Tri Nations series then moved to England.

Webster scored tries in both Tests against Great Britain, the victory at Loftus Road Stadium in London

and the loss at Huddersfield. He was also a try-scorer against England A at Warrington and played in the Test win over France at Toulouse. But the highlight was New Zealand's 24-0 defeat of the Kangaroos in the Tri Nations final at Elland Road, Leeds.

That was Australia's first series defeat since a 2-0 loss in France in 1978. It was also the first time the Kiwis had beaten Australia twice in one season since 1953. The 24-point winning margin equalled New Zealand's highest against Australia, 49-25 at Brisbane in 1952. And the British fans were as chuffed as their New Zealand counterparts to see Australia's monopoly broken in such emphatic fashion.

Sadly for Webster, his international career petered out after that, though he played in both the 2006 and 2007 Anzac Tests at Brisbane when the Kangaroos were decisive winners. In 2008 he joined Hull Kingston Rovers, where he made 105 appearances before transferring to Castleford on a three-year deal in 2013. A serious injury sidelined him for about 12 months in 2014 but the Tigers showed wisdom in re-signing him for the 2016 season.

Castleford's team last week was severely weakened by injuries, among the absentees being England Test centre Michael Shenton. It was in that position Webster scored his first try against Leeds, supporting a break by young Auckland-born fullback Denny Solomona. Webster later switched to second-row and ran powerfully onto halfback Luke Gale's pass to go over for the 74th-minute try which won the game.

"I think Jake was pretty special," said Castleford coach Daryl Powell, himself a former Great Britain Test centre. "Since we lost Michael Shenton Jake has been excellent as an anchor in the team." Powell described the team's performance in taking an early 12-0 lead and then coming back from a 12-14 half-time deficit as the best in his three seasons as club coach.

Footnote: *The other members of the 2005 New Zealand Tri-Nations squad still playing professional rugby league are Louis Anderson (Catalans), Ali Lauititi (Warriors), Frank Pritchard (Hull) and Manu Vatuvei (Warriors).*



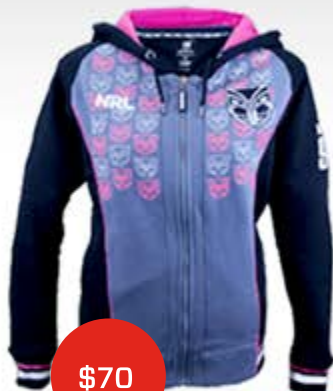
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With the Bulldogs, Chris was a member of three Grand Final winning teams- 1980, 1984 and 1985. For the Bulldogs, he played 188 first grade games (30 tries, 28 goals, 1 field goal for 163 points) in 10 seasons from 1978 and then played 58 games with Penrith in three seasons from 1988 before finishing his career with Wakefield Trinity in England. Together, the four Mortimer brothers have played 702 first grade games.

Wagga has a rich Rugby League history, but Chris is alarmed at what has happened to the local game over the past few years.

“ The Aussie Rules people are pouring money and other things into the Riverina for their game, while it seems Rugby League are not doing too much about it, “ he explained. “ Over the last few years, five young Wagga men have been recruited by the Melbourne Aussie Rules clubs, but I don’t think there has been one, over the same period, who have signed to play in the NRL. “

Josh Perkis - Living The Dream Working for the Warriors

By Ben Francis



PLAYING FOR the Warriors is a dream for many young New Zealand Rugby League players, for Josh Perkis working for the club was a dream come true. Josh started working at the Warriors in 2011 as a part of an internship through his university degree, nearly five years on Josh is still here and loving every moment of it. "It's awesome working for the Warriors" said Josh "The Warriors were my favourite sports team growing up, so to be working for them it's definitely a dream come true."

Josh started out working in marketing with the Warriors before moving into his current role of sponsorship co-ordinator, this role involves servicing the sponsors the Warriors have. "My goal is to always make our sponsors happy as possible." These include some of the Warriors biggest sponsors like Vodafone, Sky City, Wendy's and more.

Being a fan of the club also, Josh is hoping the Warriors break their finals hoodoo and make the top 8 "I hope the Warriors make the top 8, to me that is essential, and despite our start to the 2016 campaign anything can happen in the NRL. "

Josh hopes to be at the Warriors for many years to come. He might not be running around Mount Smart Stadium, but having a job behind the scenes is just as awesome. Like many Warriors fans, Josh is hoping the team can make the top 8 and make a push to win the NRL title. Like Josh said "anything can happen in the NRL."

From Sir Peter Leitch: *Josh in my opinion is an outstanding asset to our club. He is a fantastic young man and I am proud to call him a mate.*



Josh Perkis

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



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Smart Warriors Teamwork Pays Dividends

By Barry Ross



IT WAS pleasing to see the clever Warriors teamwork as they powered their way to a deserved 40-18 win on Easter Monday. This teamwork was not only evident in their numerous attacking raids, but was also there in defence. While every player did their job, the big name men had a major impact on the result. The Shaun Johnson magic was there and his amazing try in the 63rd minute, showed just what a classy player he still is. He beat at least five Newcastle players in this run after swooping on the ball at dummy half, 10 metres from the try line. His goal kicking was also a feature of the game and his six successes from seven attempts, several from wide out, enabled the score to jump up in sixes, instead of fours. Shaun suffered a very serious injury last July and it takes time to reach the level he was at before the ankle problem. He still has a way to go and being the player he is, he would be aware of this. But the evidence was there against Newcastle- he is far from finished. Maybe some of his critics this year might get off his back now.

Roger Tuivasa-Sheck was also impressive. He ran well (194 metres) and one of his high ball takes in the 18th minute, was sensational. And what about Manu Vatuvei. He may be 30 years of age, but 147 tries in his 213th NRL match speaks volumes for what he brings to the team. After missing last week's match against Melbourne, Issac Luke was busy and his clever try from dummy half, was a just reward for his efforts. Coach Andrew McFadden used Jazz Tevaga and Issac Luke well. Solomon Kata was another who impressed me and I hope his leg injury doesn't cause him to miss any football. Charlie Gubb is a real crowd favourite in New Zealand and he was a continual nuisance to his Newcastle opponents. Another positive from the match was Blake Ayshford scoring his first try for the Warriors. Coach McFadden will be happy with the statistics from the win. Seven tries to three is impressive, while 1,523 run metres was a major reason for the result. Fullbacks continue to play major roles in most NRL games. Roger Tuivasa-Sheck starred in Auckland, while at Wollongong, Josh Dugan was the reason St. George/Illawarra sneaked home against Penrith. Dugan wanted to play in the centres at the beginning of the season and his coach, Paul McGregor, thought there may have been some merit in this idea. But this was quickly shelved and Dugan left no doubt on Sunday that fullback is his best position. At ANZ Stadium, the Tigers fullback, James Tedesco, was one of the best players on the field even though he was on a beaten team against Parramatta. Each week, Tedesco is looking more and more like a State of Origin player. As usual he was always evasive when running the football, while in defence he saved two Parramatta tries with tackles on Semi Radradra and Michael Jennings.

An unsung hero for Parramatta this year has been their 32 year old goal kicking fullback, Michael Gordon. Safe under the high ball, Gordon is an excellent goal kicker with a success rate of around 80 percent over his NRL career. He now has 1,206 points in his 181 first grade games. This is 11th season of top grade football after making his debut with Penrith on 28 April 2006 against Cronulla. He moved to Cronulla in 2013 and this is his first season at Parramatta., He represented Country Origin in 2011 and 2013, as well as one State of Origin game with NSW in 2010. Another player with a career goal kicking rate of 80 percent is the Sharks, James Maloney. He has scored 1,309 points in his 162 NRL games with four clubs, Melbourne, Warriors, Roosters and Cronulla, after making his first grade debut with the Storm on 11 April 2009 against Penrith. The Sharks hard fought 14-6 win over the Storm on Monday night means there are no unbeaten teams this year. The Warriors are now 13th on the ladder with the Panthers, Knights and Roosters below them.

Early last week I had two nights with Chris and Diane Mortimer on their 600 acre farm, 14 kms north east of Wagga Wagga. Chris is the third of the four Mortimers, younger than Steve and Peter, and older than Glen. Still the same humble man he was during his successful career, Chris breeds and sells cattle, grows wheat and has an interest in many other things. Now 57, he played one Test for Australia at Port Moresby on 4 October 1986, scoring a try in the 62-12 win against Papua/New Guinea. He also played nine matches, (scoring five tries), on the 1986 Kangaroo tour of England and France. In State of Origin football, he played nine games for NSW (two tries), including all three in 1985 when the Blues won the series for the first time.

Continued on next page...

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

The Mad Butchers Weekly NRL Tipping Comp.

By John Holloway

NRL Round 5

		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							
31/03 - Brookvale	Sea Eagles v Rabbitohs	Rabbitohs	Sea Eagles	Rabbitohs	Rabbitohs	Rabbitohs	Rabbitohs	Rabbitohs
1/04 - CBUS	Titans v Broncos	Broncos	Broncos	Broncos	Broncos	Broncos	Broncos	Broncos
2/04 - AAMI	Storm v Knights	Storm	Knights	Storm	Storm	Storm	Storm	Storm
2/04 - Cambelltown	Tigers v Sharks	Sharks	Tigers	Sharks	Sharks	Sharks	Sharks	Sharks
2/04 - 1300Smiles	Cowboys v Dragons	Cowboys	Cowboys	Cowboys	Cowboys	Cowboys	Cowboys	Cowboys
3/04 - Century Coast	Roosters v Warriors	Warriors	Warriors	Warriors	Warriors	Warriors	Warriors	Warriors
3/04 - Pirtek	Eels v Panthers	Eels	Eels	Eels	Eels	Eels	Eels	Eels
4/04 - Belmore	Bulldogs v Raiders	Bulldogs	Bulldogs	Bulldogs	Bulldogs	Bulldogs	Bulldogs	Bulldogs

How they're traveling....

Picks last week	4/8	3/8	4/8	6/8	6/8	7/8	5/8
Total picks	14/32	15/32	16/32	19/32	18/32	17/32	15/32

THAT'S MORE like it...not just the mighty Warriors but the Tipping crew as well...Wily Willy Hayward a top class 7, just one off the full house bonus and could have made it if the Panthers hadn't let the kick-off from their late go ahead try bounce out between players. This allowed the Dragons one last red zone opportunity which they gleefully accepted dotting down for the 14/12 success. Montz and fast Eddie were hot on his tail with 6s. High Tackle a regulation 5, Sue and JC on 4 and Big Joe in the tail-gunner possie on 3.

Didn't see all the footy on the weekend as I was behind a paint brush at the batch in Whangamata...no telly down there but snuck over to the neighbours Skybox for a couple of matches. My main impression is that the Queensland Cowboys and Bennetts Broncos will take some beating this year. A hugely entertaining battle this with both sides performing at the very top level and setting the benchmark for aspiring title chasers. Milford could be anything and took it to the older Master JT, what a great tussle 21/20 and a result that was achieved not without a few Bunker bumbles in Cowboy fans eyes.

The top 4 Titans are the surprise packet thus far and made another miraculous comeback to tip over the Raiders who were favoured at home at GIO. Like him or loath him Greg Bird holds this side together with his win at all cost attitude. Newbie Coach Barrett finally cracked a smile as his Sea Eagles broke their duck with a bit of luck 22/20 over the hapless 4 and 0 Roosters.

The Bulldogs are baring their "monster pack" teeth and bashed the Bunnies into submission 42/12. Russells Rabbitohs without slammin Sammy Burgess looked out of sorts and dare I say it the great man at the back is looking a tad ordinary. Bellamys purple gang went down with Captain fantastic Smith not as dominant as usual and Cronk looking cranky.

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The Storm look a bit staid to me, they could have been beat by our boys last week and couldn't get past the arm-wrestle experts at Shark Park... super talented wingman Valentine-Holmes had a handling mare on the flank but redeemed with a beaut bust up the guts to set up 6 of the 14 points to 6 Cronulla advantage.

Next cab off the rank were the emerging Eels who demonstrated again that their defence is the equal of their very promising attack blanking the tenuous Tigers 8 zip at ANZ and rounding out an exciting Monday triple Bill. The Mighty Warriors got off the start line after an 11 loss run. Coach Cappy was less than effusive at the post match and rightly so...one swallow doesn't make a summer was his statement, he could see the mistakes still evident in the homies performance. For the die-hard faithful the first half was very scratchy, handling and other errors gifting the Knights tries they should not have had. For all that we always looked the better team and the second 40 was a lot better. Jazz Tevanga continues to impress and we lost nothing when Luke was not on the field. The human cannonball Charlie Gubb is fast becoming the crowd favourite. Mannering was a little out of sorts but is a champion who will bounce back...when you play as well as he does across season after season you are allowed an off day. Roosters away this week lets get set to crow.

2011 Grand Final Souvenir Hat Giveaway

To celebrate the Vodafone Warriors win on Monday we have 50 souvenir 2011 Grand Final Vodafone Warriors caps to be won (these hats are a collectors item).



To be in to win 1 of 50 2011 Souvenir hats just send a stamped, addressed envelope or postcard to me in the mail with your name, address, phone number on the back to the address.

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Manukau, Auckland



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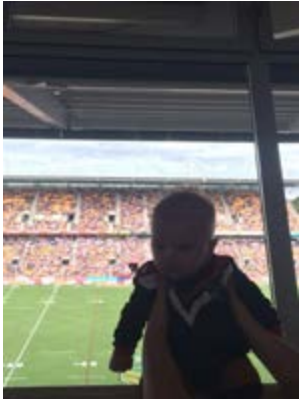
The Youngest Warriors Fan

Hi Butch,

JUST WANTED to send you a quick email to say that my 11 week old son Beau (surely the youngest member of the Sir Peter Leitch Club) had a great time at his first home game the other week against the Storm. My wife Haidee, Beau and I tried our best to cheer the team on, but unfortunately the boys couldn't get the win, although Beau looked very cute in his warriors outfit that his Grandad Rob brought him.

Go the Warriors!

Cheers, James, Haidee, and Beau



Some Awesome Young Fans



Left: Maya with the Legened Stacey Jones.

Right: Ashton with Sir Peter Leitch.

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.

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Lillyman Set for 150th Game for Club

By Richard Becht



SEASONED CAMPAIGNER Jacob Lillyman becomes just the 11th player to make 150 NRL appearances for the Vodafone Warriors when he fronts the Sydney Roosters in Sunday's fifth-round encounter at Central Coast Stadium (2.00pm kick-off local; 4.00pm NZT).

It's the second significant milestone in nine months for the 11-game Queensland Origin forward after making his 200th career appearance against Canberra last June.

With his partner Tui-kaye Cole and daughter Arani present, the 32-year-old was presented with a commemorative jersey by long-time team-mate Simon Mannering at a team lunch today.

Now in his 14th season since his NRL debut with North Queensland in 2003, Lillyman has underlined his durability and consistency time and again. Indeed, since midway through the 2012 campaign he has appeared in 87 of a possible 92 matches for the club.

On Sunday he'll draw level with fellow Queenslanders Micheal Luck as the only other Australian in the Vodafone Warriors' 150 club; Luck played 150 times from 2006-2012 before retiring.

While Lillyman prepares for a special moment in his eighth season since joining the club in 2009, fullback Roger Tuivasa-Sheck faces one in his debut campaign when he comes up against his old Roosters side for the first time.

For the fourth straight game this season, Tuivasa-Sheck hit the 200-metre mark in yesterday's 40-18 win over Newcastle, running 203 metres from 21 runs; he also put Solomone Kata in for his try and had a key hand in Tuimoala Lolohea's second half touchdown.

"These are two big moments for Jake and Tui," said Vodafone Warriors assistant coach Andrew Webster.

"Jake is hugely popular around the team and can always be counted on to perform at a consistently high level.

"Roger has been great for us since the start of the season and went better again against the Knights. His combinations are really developing and we're seeing the benefits of what he provides for us."

Webster said there was room for satisfaction over beating the Knights for the first win of the year but the quality of the overall performance wasn't up to expectations.

"We felt we played a lot better when we lost to Brisbane and Melbourne in our previous two games," he said.

"There are a lot of areas we need to improve in when we take on the Roosters. We were just too sloppy at times."

The Vodafone Warriors have named the same side used against Newcastle yesterday.

Centre Kata and Albert Vete, who started at loose forward, came out of the match with leg knocks but Webster said there was confidence both would be able to play against the Roosters.

Simon Mannering has again been named to start in the second row with Vete at loose forward.

The Vodafone Warriors have won 18 of the 35 clashes against the Roosters while they've lost 16 with one draw. In 17 away games the record is 8-8 with one draw.

VODAFONE WARRIORS v SYDNEY ROOSTERS

Central Coast Stadium, Gosford

2.00pm, Sunday, April 3

VODAFONE WARRIORS

- 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 Simon Mannering
- 12 Ryan Hoffman (C)
- 13 Albert Vete

Interchange

- 14 Jazz Tevaga
- 15 Sam Lisone
- 16 Charlie Gubb
- 17 Konrad Hurrell



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Sharon and Shaun Cavanagh and Ashley Miranda having a great time in the lounge who were guests of lounge member Dan Graham a very kind man is Don.

If you wish to **subscribe** or **unsubscribe** please email Stephan Maier at stephan.maier@medstar.co.nz

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