

VODAFONE



Sir Peter Leitch Club

AT MT SMART STADIUM, HOME OF THE MIGHTY VODAFONE WARRIORS

Newsletter

27 April 2016

#119

Low Blow By David Kemeys



NOW I do not claim to know former State of Origin coach Graham Lowe well.

I have met the bloke several times, and he clearly knows more about league than I ever will, and I have always enjoyed his company – though he probably wouldn't have the first idea who I am.

So I will remind him. I am one of the blokes he tried to sell the club to when he and Malcolm Boyle had a partnership with Tainui in the Warriors.

It was all talk and I suspect he was never really interested in selling, but we did have a meeting about the newspaper I then worked for, taking his stake.

This is only interesting because Graham was quick out of the blocks after the 42-0 drubbing we got from the Storm to claim our current side is “fast becoming the worst side in the club's history”.

Plenty of people will agree, and even captain Ryan Hoffman admitted we were embarrassing.

Lowe told ONE News the club has serious problems that need some “honest reflection”.

“I think they're fast becoming, if they're not already, the worst Warriors side in history,” he said.

All this talk of honest reflection got me to thinking about 1998 and 99, which I'll concede some younger supporters might consider to be the dark ages.

And they were, for the sides back then were truly awful.

Yet they had some quality players too, men like Quentin Pongia, Ali Lauitiiti, Terry (The Rock) Hermansson (who was such a favourite of mine I actual-

ly took a Rock to his final game and suffered the bad back that came with carrying it), Monty Betham and Francis Meli (who used to score in our corner and we repaid his effort with a chant – “Francis Meli – you're on tele”, as the replay came on the big screen).

But we also had players like Zane Clarke, Frank Watene, Peter Lewis and Carl Doherty - and with the greatest respect to men who earned a call-up I will never get – they are hardly household names and long-remembered fan favourites.

So frankly, this side, while not setting the world on fire – or making any kind of spark some might argue - is nowhere near as bad as that.

In 98 we lost 15 of our 24 games and were so awful I have blocked it from my memory.

Even the club's website records the year as one of “major disappointments”.

“Once again the Warriors fail to emerge as contenders, while the club also stumbles financially. Original owner the Auckland Rugby League walks away as Graham Lowe and Malcolm Boyle combine with Tainui to buy the Warriors.”

The site does not say whether that was one of the disappointments.

Things did not get a lot better in 99, although we did win 14 of 26, including a late season rally that saw us win our last four, and it was also the year Stacey “Jones clocked up 100 games.

And this was under Lowe's watch.

Before The Slaughter

VODAFONE WARRIORS head coach Andrew McFadden, assistant coach Justin Morgan and captain Ryan Hoffman all had special reason to look forward to the return of the traditional Anzac Day encounter with Melbourne.

I know this because it said so on the Warriors own website.

McFadden finished his playing career with the Storm in 2003 and 2004, and it was the second anniversary of his first win as an NRL head coach, when we beat the Storm 16-10 in 2014.

Morgan was making a homecoming too. It was his first trip back with us after being one of Craig Belamy's assistants in 2014 and 2015.

And for Hoffman he lined up for Melbourne in five of the previous six Anzac Day games.

Hard to imagine how they are feeling now isn't it?

The Slaughter

It's painful but Melbourne completely dominated and we got what we deserved.

We were never in the contest and it could have been worse, with a host of disallowed Storm tries.

Truth be known, I hate this match. Terrible time that means I will be bleary-eyed in the morning, and it seems like more often than not, it will be made worse because I will have been unable to sleep because I'm so wound up about how terrible we were.

Fortunately the players slept through the game, so they wouldn't have been as tired as the fans on Monday morning.

To be fair, the Storm were relentless, up 16-0 in as many minutes and ahead 28-0 at halftime.

Surely it was not going to be worse for us in the second 40. It wasn't. It improved from despicable to deplorable.

The scoreboard damage slowed but with Simon Mannering added to the casualty list – headed of course by Tuimolala Lolohea, who had gone off with a knee injury - we were down to two on the bench.

It was obvious there was more pain on the way and the Storm added three more tries to absolutely smash us.

Frankly we were bloody lucky to get 0.

After The Slaughter

The match stats said it all. Melbourne taking the line breaks 10-1 and completing 36 of 43 sets as opposed to our pitiful 21 of 30. The Storm had 11 players who made 100 metres plus and two who topped 200 metres. We had six over the 100 metres.

Even more concerning are injuries to Lolohea and Mannering.

Penalty Nightmare Drags On

Coaching from your armchair is easy-peasy but here's a tip anyway. Stop giving away endless penalties because you can't defend them.

Allowing sides to march up the field because of indiscretions has killed us, and it shows no sign of stopping.

Penalised in the first few minutes, Tohu Harris walked across. We offended again at the restart -

Tim Glasby walked across.

We did it again minutes later. Suliasi Vunivalu went across but his right foot was out. Talk about dodging a bullet. But did we learn, did we hell.

Blake Ayshford got sent to the bin – who knows why – but with only 12 players on the field Jesse Bromwich walked over.

It's just plain depressing.

Playing The Blame Game

Coach Andrew McFadden has slammed our lack of commitment. Down to 13th, and looking beyond useless doing it, staring at a points differential of -58.

McFadden is again feeling the heat and he was fuming, describing the performance as unacceptable. You think?

"We never really got ourselves into the game. You've got to turn up and we didn't, and it's hard to win any football games when you're not prepared to roll your sleeves up."

Captain Ryan Hoffman didn't hold back either: "We were passive."

"Up front they played to their strengths, and we as a pack weren't willing to stand in front of them."

Johnson The Water Boy

I am among those who thought it was fantastic that Shaun Johnson went back to his roots and turned up at Mountfort Park in Manurewa to act as a water boy for the under 10s.

He had used his Facebook page to let his followers know he had Saturday off, and that he wanted to run water for a team in the Auckland region. He invited registrations of interest.

It went viral, attracting 10,000 likes and 2000 comments, while a video on the Vodafone Warriors' Facebook page had a reach of more than 640,000.

The Manurewa Marlins Southsiders Under-10s got the nod.

Marlins coach Zak Ward had written: "My 3rd year coaching and this year's been a little different as I'm doing it from my wheelchair, huge Warriors fans and to most of them you are their favourite player, be awesome for them and their mums ha ha."

Ward lost his leg as the result of a car accident.

Johnson met up with Ward and his charges and told them he was there to run water during their game against the Tuakau Broncos.

It became evident the Broncos were in for a tough day against a stronger Marlins side – so Johnson simply changed sides. Someone happened to have an adult-sized Tuakau jersey, which Johnson donned, not only running water for his new players but also joining in with his new team.

Gold.



Shaun Johnson with the Maurewa Marlins on Saturday the 23rd of April. He was a big hit with the kids.

So What's This About Then?

All of that Johnson goodwill makes it harder to understand then how the parents on the sideline of schoolboy league had so many unpleasant things to say about 10-year-old Manurewa Marlins player Eljae Pukeiti-Mara.

Eljae was subjected to taunts about his size – and some of them apparently came from his own team's supporters.

His mum hit out on social media and good on her.

It is utterly disgraceful. Hang your heads in shame.

Which bit of publicity do you think people will end up talking about?

Eljae was laughed at and abused so his mum took to Facebook and support flowed in from all around the world, including from leading players and even hip-hop dance sensation and fellow South-Aucklander Parris Goebel.

This weekend Eljae and his mum will be at Mt Smart as VIP guest of Sir Peter, because he organised season tickets and a jersey for them to show Eljae he was in his corner too.

It's hard to believe we could cop this sort of negativity at a children's game!

Eljae, meanwhile, says he's feeling good about the season and is really happy to have received so much support. Good on you mate.

We can all learn from Eljae's mum.

She told anyone who cared to read no child needed to hear people talking down about them, and urged parents to support the children. "All of them, win or lose. It's a game. They're out there playing the best they can."

Vodafone Juniors Win NYC Clash

The Vodafone Junior Warriors overcame adversity and a fast-finishing Melbourne before completing a home-and-away double with a 36-28 win.

Junior Pauga was forced off with injury after just 16 minutes, forcing coach Kelvin Wright to call on interchange back rower Joe Vuna to play the rest of the match on the wing.

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And seven minutes later the Vodafone Junior Warriors were reduced to 15 available players after prop Bunty Afoa left the field after a head knock.

They survived the setbacks to record their third victory of the season – their first on the road – backing up a 30-16 triumph over the Storm at Mt Smart on March 20.

It has given them a 3-5 record to lift them to 11th on the ladder

Curtain-Raiser Set

The Taranaki Sharks and Manawatu Mustangs will go head-to-head in front of a big crowd at Yarrow Stadium on May 21.

The curtain-raiser between the two teams will kick off the night before the first NRL game ever played in Taranaki between the Warriors and Canberra.

“It’s a fantastic opportunity for our local league heroes to play in front of a capacity audience and to be a part of a significant event,” New Plymouth District Council venues lead Nelita Byrne said.

For more information and tickets visit npeventvenues.nz

Dragons Info

The gates open at 9:30am ahead of the early morning start for the NYC team at 9:45am, and the ISP side at 11:45am. The NRL game is scheduled for 2pm.

The good deal on offer for the St George game is that up to two kids are able to get in free with every full-paying adult, so there’s no excuse not to be in the stands on May 1. Don’t delay.

Kiwis Schedule Out

The Kiwis open their Four Nations title defence against England at Huddersfield on October 30.

The tournament schedule is out and the Kiwis face Australia as part of a November 6 double-header at Coventry, and then Scotland at Workington on November 12.

The other big match-up – England v Australia – is at London’s Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park on November 14, with the final set down for Anfield, home of Liverpool FC, a week later.

Anfield last hosted a league game 19 years ago, when St Helens moved their Super League fixture against Castleford there.

“We are delighted with the venues, and sure the tournament will deliver compelling and memorable action on the field,” says Four Nations tournament director Jon Dutton.

“Anfield is an iconic sporting venue and I am certain all teams will be determined to reach the final to play in front of what will be a very special atmosphere.”

Putting It Right!

In our last newsletter an article on the Scott Electrical Premiership in Northland had an error in it that we want to straighten out. The article stated that last year’s Minor Premiers and Champions Hikurangi Stags had joined the breakaway competition headed by former politician Hone Harawira.

This was incorrect, the Hikurangi Stags have not aligned with the rebel league. Rugby League Northland manages the legitimate competition in the Northland with its players, senior and juniors eligible to compete for the Northern Swords in NZRL age-grade and Premier Tournaments. The Mad Butcher just wants to say ‘Good luck and enjoy your footy’ to all the players young and old in the Rugby League Northland competition. We wish to apologise for any misunderstanding

SAS Fox Memorial Premiership Rd 3

Mt Albert 22 Papakura 26

Richmond 18 Howick 36

Glenora 34 Otahuhu 16

Pt Chevalier 60 Northcote 0

Mangere East 24 Marist 28

Crown Lift Trucks Sharman Cup

Bay Roskill 56 Hibiscus Coast 12

East Coast Bays 36 Papatoetoe 22

New Lynn 28 Pakuranga 38

Manukau 30 Mt Wellington 28

Otara 8 Ellerslie 22

Waitemata 52 Manurewa 12

Ponsonby 16 Te Atatu 70

Glenfield BYE

ARL RD3 Results





At the Melbourne Game with our Loyal Fans



Some of the loyal fans Janice and I had the pleasure of sitting with at the Melbourne game.



John Russell from Tauranga and Anne Stevens from Auckland, members from way back.



Blain (from Tauranga) & Maisie (from Hamilton) living in Melbourne. Die hard Warriors Fans.



Brook Tadeusz, Brejnakowski, Aimee and Erin.



Omar and Maryam Niyazi, originally from Papatoetoe, Auckland. Avid Vodafone Warriors supporters now living in Melbourne.



Dorothy Beazley, Fred Beazley, Taniora Beazley, all Mangere East Hawks.



Mahia & Clayton Fisher from the West Coast of the South Island.



Back Kayla Tukere (Te Teko), Jay Jay Renet (Te Teko), Jogan (Te Teko), Boboy Rahi (Whakatane), Jodene Kokiri (Whakatane) Front Havanah-Hiria, Matariki, Kaiah. All living in Melbourne.



Kym Warner, Chris Neal, Wilson Reynolds, Mark Reynolds. All die hard Aussies but good Vodafone Warriors fans.



Paul from Bucklands Beach and Matthew Bray now live in Melbourne.



Jess Owens (64941) Anthony Tebbutt (64940) Mike Sears (64938) Andrew Moore (64939), 4 cops from Wellington flew over for tonight's game and are all members.



Dane Bennett Melbourne. Jerome Holland travelled from NZ. Tauhara Bennett Melbourne. Warren Bennett Melbourne. Thomas Haretuku travelled from NZ.

The Coach Who Beat Clive Churchill

By John Coffey QSM



STEPHEN KEARNEY has the chance to become only the second Kiwis coach to register four consecutive wins over Australia in the Anzac Test at Newcastle on May 6. We have had many outstanding coaches but only Cantabrian Jim Amos, in 1952 and 1953, achieved such a glittering record against the Kangaroos.

As a player, a youthful Amos was mentored by Jim Sanders – Canterbury’s most capped international between the world wars – at the Addington club. Amos toured Australia as an inside back with the 1930 New Zealand team, when no Tests were played, and kicked four goals as loose forward in the second Test against England at Christchurch in 1932.

Amos retired after leading Addington to win a third club championship in 1935 and started his long service as a Canterbury, South Island and New Zealand selector a year later. He had big boots to fill when he took over the Kiwis from Auckland legend Scotty McClymont in 1952, soon after McClymont’s team had returned from a 40-match tour of Britain and France.

Despite losing the first Test at Sydney, Amos devised the tactics to defeat a Kangaroos side captained by champion fullback Clive Churchill. In the second Test at Brisbane the Kiwis won by a remarkable 49-25 and back in Sydney four days later they clinched the series 19-9. In 1953 the Kiwis beat Australia at Christchurch 25-5 and Wellington 12-11 before conceding two late tries to lose the third Test 16-18 at Auckland.

“Jim got us all together and sat us down,” recalled versatile Auckland back Cyril Eastlake more than 50 years after the 1952 tour. “He said, ‘I only played one or two games for the Kiwis but you fellows have just come back after seven months in England. What I want you to do is work out how you want to play. You know more about it than I do but I’m a coach. Whatever you want I’ll execute.’”

“I’ll never forget Jimmy Amos,” said a misty-eyed Eastlake. “His side took the series off Australia and beat them with a world record score. That was an amazing side because of Jim Amos. Jim was a mighty bloke. We played for Jim, not the country. Jim cried after the second Test in Queensland when we thrashed them, 49-25. Well, he had us in tears too.”

Churchill, dubbed “the Little Master”, became an original Immortal in Australia but very little is mentioned of his experiences against the 1952 and 1953 Kiwis. Amos consulted his players and decided to attack the Kangaroos by putting pressure on Churchill. New Zealand also had a great fullback in Des White, who freely admits he initially doubted Amos’ ideas.

“Jim Amos planned tactics I didn’t like at all,” recalled White. “I was to kick deep and wide, into the open spaces. I couldn’t understand it at all because the Australians also had Denis Flannery on one wing and Noel Pidding on the other, and they could hike. But we had flair in our backrow forwards, Francie Mulcare, Alister Atkinson and Trav Hardwick.

“Our guys were taking off so quick they were able to ring Churchill. He panicked and copped plenty, especially from Francie, a tough farmer from the West Coast who put a couple of sweet ones on him. Churchill had the worst game I ever saw him play,” said White, who kicked 11 goals to complement the nine tries scored by his team-mates. He also recalled Churchill not wanting anything to do with Mulcare as the snowy-haired second-rower charged through for the series-clinching try in the third Test.

“Jim worked out the Australian weaknesses and put our strengths up against them,” said prop Lory Blanchard, who himself went on to coach the 1971 Grand Slam Kiwis to victories over Australia, Britain and France. “He noticed that Clive Churchill could only take off on the left foot. In those days fullbacks kicked a lot so Jim sent Alister Atkinson through on Churchill’s left and Frank Mulcare on his right to cut him off every time. Churchill had been their danger man.”

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Another star was 20-year-old Taranaki centre Ron McKay, who debuted in Australia. He scored two tries at Brisbane, one in Sydney, two more at Christchurch and one in Wellington. The nine Kiwis to play in all four Test wins were backs Des White, Jimmy Edwards, Tommy Baxter, Ron McKay and Jimmy Haig and forwards Bill McLennan, George Davidson, Alister Atkinson and Frank Mulcare.

Jim Amos coached the Kiwis for only three years, retiring after an injury-wrecked campaign at the inaugural World Cup in France. In 1962 his old mentor Jim Sanders said: "I have always been very proud of Jim in every respect – as a sincere man, as a citizen and as a rugby league person. His record speaks for itself and requires no repetition on my part." Jim Amos died in 1981, a year after belatedly receiving a NZRL Distinguished Service Award.



Kiwis loose forward Alister Atkinson (left) challenges Australian fullback Clive Churchill at Christchurch in 1953.



The 1952 touring Kiwis brains trust, coach Jim Amos (left) and captain Travers Hardwick before the 49-25 victory at Brisbane.



The Vodafone Warriors in Melbourne
Photos: Ra Pomare



Concerns over Concussions in the NRL are Back Again

By John Deaker



HOW TO best deal with head knocks in sport is an issue that will never go away. If there was an easy answer to the issue it would have been found by now. There's been improvements to the NRL's attitude and procedures dealing with concussions in recent years but like many of the main contact sports around the world there is still plenty of room to improve. Evidence of this has been witnessed during the last month of the NRL - most prominently during incidents that involved Parramatta and Penrith.

The NRL punished Parramatta for their abuse of the system but the \$20,000 fine (with \$10,000 of it suspended) isn't a penalty that even nearly corresponded adequately with the seriousness of the offence.

An incident involving Peter Wallace from Penrith against St George Illawarra late in March was also very controversial. Gordon Tallis highlighted the incident on Monday Night with Matty Johns last week.

"They're doing it every game [teams wroughting the system]," he said.

"Peter Wallace was knocked out and didn't come off... they wrought it no matter what and it's very hard because it's like if someone pulls a hamstring it's very hard to see - a broken arm you can tell - you don't know if they're concussed so you can't challenge it."

The sad thing is that the better awareness of what a serious issue head knocks in sport is has now been around for a long time yet some clubs remain so disrespectful to laws that are intended to help protect players. We continually hear players, clubs and doctors say things like "We'll learn from this" or that a particular incident has been a "wake-up call." Yet then those same players and teams seem to drift back into their bad habits, particularly when they're under pressure.

The biggest flaw in any attempts to change the NRL's systems and attitudes to head knocks has been their failure to adequately deal with the huge pressure that players, coaches and team's medical staffs come under to keep players on the field or get them back out there whenever possible.

Back in 2014 the NSW State of Origin hooker Robbie Farah was very open and honest as a panelist on NRL 360 about why he felt independent doctors were needed in the NRL.

"I almost think there's got to be an independent doctor at every game. What I'm concerned about is inconsistencies from club to club," Farah said.

"If my club doctor was there telling me I'm not going back on the field I'd tell him to get stuffed - and he'd probably listen to me."

Unfortunately more than two years later there's been no indication that administrators listened or learned from Farah's plea.

The Warriors' doctor John Mayhew is an advocate of independent doctors being present on the sideline. He's been pushing for it in rugby league, having seen how successful it's been recently in rugby union.

"It works in rugby," he observes.

"I've suggested it to rugby league for the last ten years. I'd have no problem with that [system in league]. It's been brought up many times and they've questioned who would pay for the independent doctors and all those logistical things. If you went to a Super rugby game there'd be a doctor there that would do it voluntarily."

Mayhew explains that what happens in rugby is that if the player comes off the team doctor can do the injury assessment but that test is monitored by the independent doctor, therefore providing the external contribution either way.

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Rugby's systems are far from perfect though and an incident involving George Smith getting knocked out against the Lions in 2013 but only going off the field briefly was the best proof of that.

One of the most encouraging improvements in rugby and league has been that better education of the long-term problems athletes could have if they don't look after themselves has led to some players making smarter decisions when they have the time to think about possible consequences. This has seen them more prepared to sit out many weeks on the sideline when in the past they may have ignored or covered up symptoms. More early retirements have become prevalent too.

The other problem rugby league has encountered recently is coaches flaunting the sport's 'improved' concussion laws by using concussion checks as an opportunity to rest players without that time off the field counting as an interchange. Newcastle Knights' coach Nathan Brown has been very outspoken regarding this issue and Australian captain Cameron Smith supported him last week when he said: "It does seem that there is an increase of players getting taken off the field with concussion or a trainer saying that there is concussion now and they are finding themselves coming back on the field within the 15 minute time frame."

What's for sure is that we will never find a perfect resolution to this very complex issue. However, people that care about the sport of rugby league must continue to push for improvements to the current system if they truly love the game. Experimenting with independent sideline doctors is hopefully a move that is not too far away.



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Jillaroos Preparing Well for Crucial Silver Ferns Test

By Barry Ross



JILLAROOS COACH, Steve Folkes, is looking forward to next week's Womans Test match against the Kiwi Ferns. He was appointed as the Australian Womans coach in August 2014 and since that time both countries have each won a Test. The Kiwis won 12-8 in Wollongong, 80 kms south of Sydney in November 2014 and last year on 3 May at Suncorp in Brisbane, the Australians took the honours with their 22-14 victory.

"Womans Rugby League has really come on over the last few years," Folkes explained. "Not only have the numbers increased but so has the standard. Next week's Test will be a high quality game with plenty of exciting football." At the end of last year, there were over 400,000 female participants in Rugby League type games -tackle, touch and tag - throughout Australia, while more than 171,000 of these were from the schools population. In club competitions there was a 26 percent increase in 2015 from the previous year and in refereeing, two ladies, Kasey Badger and Belinda Sleeman, have made their NRL debuts. Sleeman made her debut in 2014 running the sideline and Badger did the same last year. New Zealander, Rochelle Tamarua is another promising female whistle blower. She did well at the 2015 Auckland nines and has worked on the sideline in Holden Cup games this year.

Two well known players in the Australian Womans team are Ruan Sims and Stephanie Hancock. Ruan is the sister of the three Sims brothers, Ashton, Korbin and Tariq. She is a dual international, as she was a member of the 2010 Australian Womans Rugby team, who came third in that year's World Cup. Stephanie is the daughter of 1982 Kangaroo tourist to England and France, Rohan Hancock. Now 60, Rohan played three Tests.

The Australian womans team will go into camp at a Newcastle Hotel this Friday, giving Folkes a week to prepare for the Test on Friday 6 May. Channel 9 will televise the Test and it will be shown to Australian audiences straight after the Mens Test finishes.

Folkes has had a great career in Rugby League. As a player, he appeared in five Tests for Australia, was a member of the 1986 Kangaroos to England and France and played nine State of Origin matches for NSW. In a stellar 15 year career with the Bulldogs, he played a total of 313 grade games, 245 in first grade (16 games as captain), and was a member of four, first grade Grand Final Premiership winning teams (1980, 1984, 1985 and 1988). After becoming a coach, he guided the Bulldogs to the reserve grade Super League title of 1997. In 1998 he was appointed as the Bulldogs first grade coach and in 11 seasons, he won 162 of his 288 games as first grade coach. In 2004 he coached the Bulldogs to the Premiership.

Watching the Cowboys-Eels match, I was amazed to hear the commentators say that this was Parramatta's first game out of Sydney. In their first seven fixtures, they played four at their home ground, two at ANZ Stadium, which is only about 10 kms or so up the road and one over the Harbour Bridge at Brookvale Oval, which is about 40 kms from their home base. This is a huge difference to what the Warriors have done since this year's competition began. The New Zealanders have flown across the Tasman four times, gone down to Wellington and played three games at home. They began 2016 at Campbelltown which is 50 kms or so south west of Sydney centre, then came Brisbane, Gosford (90 kms north of Sydney) and last Monday night Melbourne.

Now I am very aware that the Warriors are a New Zealand team playing in an Australian competition. But this big travel schedule is a big burden to overcome and when the Warriors performances are discussed it should be taken into account. Obviously the NRL would like the entire 16 teams to face the same problems but this can't happen with the Warriors based in another country. I am not bringing up the Warriors travel commitments to criticise the NRL, it is just to illustrate one of the many problems facing the players, coaching staff and officials.

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I was pleased to see the referees and the bunker made what I believe to be the correct decision in sin-binning Parramatta's Corey Norman, in Saturday night's game at Townsville. It did have a big bearing on the outcome of a high quality match and Eels coach, Brad Arthur, was not too pleased with the decision, which came with 15 minutes to play and Parramatta leading 18-16. Arthur correctly made the point at the after match media conference, that " not many had gone to the bin this year for that offence " and he is correct. But it was the right call by the officials. However it wasn't the right call to disallow an earlier try to Eels captain, Kieran Foran.

The bunker and the referees have gone overboard with their examinations of decoy runners and obstructions. They have turned these into black and white decisions, with no common sense being involved. The bunker and the referees were not great in the Newcastle-Manly game, while Roosters coach, Trent Robinson, was critical of the bunker's contribution in his team's match against St. George/Illawarra. At the beginning of the season most people were impressed with the bunker, but after some time to have a close analysis of it, there are some problems.

Cronulla are doing well this year and two players who have contributed plenty to this are Michael Ennis and James Maloney. Yet both have unwanted statistics. Ennis is the most penalised player in the game so far this year, and Maloney has missed the most tackles in 2016. Despite this I believe both men have played major roles in Cronulla's success. According to the NRL stats site, after eight rounds, Ennis had been penalised 12 times, while Maloney had missed 31 tackles. Ennis did give away an unnecessary penalty, after a great tackle from Luke Lewis, in the Sharks tight 20-18 win over Penrith on Sunday, but he also was a major contributor to the victory. He is a positive for the Sharks off field as well and on Anzac Day he was at the local dawn service with his children, at 5.30 am. Not only did he attend this important ceremony, but he was one of the speakers, as was the Federal Treasurer and local member of Parliament, Scott Morrison. This ceremony was in the suburb of Miranda in the Sutherland Shire which is in Sydney's south. Now 32, Ennis has now played 255 first grade games in a 14 year career with Newcastle, St. George/Illawarra, Brisbane, the Bulldogs and now Cronulla. Maloney turns 30 in June and he has played 166 first grade games and scored 1,355 points in his eight season first grade career with Melbourne, the Warriors, the Roosters and Cronulla. While on the subject of Cronulla, Paul Gallen's stats from the Penrith game were outstanding. For the first time this season he played the full 80 minutes and made 246 running metres, 21 hit ups and 43 tackles. Not bad for a man who turns 35 in August and has played 264 first grade matches. No doubt Australian coach, Mal Meninga, was impressed with his efforts on Sunday.

Kangaroos Squad for 2016 Downer Test Match

1. Darius Boyd | Broncos
2. Semi Radradra | Eels
3. Greg Inglis | Rabbitohs
4. Josh Dugan | Dragons
5. Blake Ferguson | Roosters
6. Johnathan Thurston | Cowboys
7. Cooper Cronk | Storm
8. Matt Scott | Cowboys
9. Cameron Smith (c) | Storm
10. Paul Gallen | Sharks

11. Josh Papalii | Raiders
12. Matt Gillett | Broncos
13. Corey Parker | Broncos

Interchange

14. Josh McGuire | Broncos
 15. Michael Morgan | Cowboys
 16. James Tamou | Cowboys
 17. Sam Thaiday | Broncos
- Coach: Mal Meninga



Kangaroos vs New Zealand Kiwis
at Newcastle's Hunter Stadium on Friday, May 6



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The Mad Butchers Weekly NRL Tipping Comp.

By John Holloway

NRL Round 9

		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							
28/04 - ANZ	Rabbitohs v Tigers	Rabbitohs	Rabbitohs	Rabbitohs	Rabbitohs	Rabbitohs	Rabbitohs	Rabbitohs
29/04 - ANZ	Eels v Bulldogs	Bulldogs	Eels	Eels	Bulldogs	Eels	Eels	Eels
30/04 - Carrington	Panthers v Raiders	Panthers	Panthers	Panthers	Raiders	Panthers	Raiders	Panthers
30/04 - ALLIANZ	Roosters v Knights	Roosters	Roosters	Roosters	Roosters	Roosters	Roosters	Roosters
30/04 - Brookvale	Sea Eagles v Cowboys	Cowboys	Cowboys	Cowboys	Cowboys	Cowboys	Cowboys	Cowboys
1/05 - Mt Smart	Warriors v Dragons	Warriors	Warriors	Warriors	Warriors	Warriors	Warriors	Warriors
1/04 - CBus	Titans v Storm	Storm	Storm	Storm	Storm	Storm	Storm	Storm
1/05 - Shark Pack	Sharks v Broncos	Broncos	Sharks	Broncos	Broncos	Sharks	Broncos	Sharks

How they're traveling....

Picks last week	5/8	7/8	5/8	4/8	4/8	7/8	7/8
Total picks	36/64	33/64	38/64	41/64	39/64	41/64	40/64

CLOSING IN on the Leader. Squeaky bum time for Fast Eddie as the hunters get the scent. Wily Bill Hayward joins the Dutchman on top of the leaderboard on 41pts with yours truly hot on the trail with 40 and Montz 39. JC in the frame on 38 and Big Joe and Super Sue just a couple of shots back. Big Joe, Billy and High Tackle were 7 from 7 and sitting pretty for the Full-house bonus but the Mighty Warriors cut us off at the pass!! BUGGER. Only one third of the way team plenty of water to go under the bridge yet.

The Brisbane Bashers and the Townsville Terrors continue to show the way, the hot ticket for a big dance replay. Bennetts boys disposed of the tame Rabbits 30/8 with Milford running hot, Corey Oates still airborne and Parker as good as ever in record breaking game # 331. For the South-siders Sam Burgess was a one man crusade attacking everything that moved to the ire of the refs.

JT's Cowboys slipped it to the Eels 32/16 but not without a controversial Corey Norman sin bin advantage. The Eels actually lead 16/14 at the start of the last quarter but then the far north crew kicked away, too much class in the end. The Belmore Demolition mob looked home and hosed at 20/8 with the last quarter looming but as they do the Titans came storming back 20/20 at the hooter. Desperate Dessys heart rate at max till Josh Reynolds slotted the Golden point winner. Rickys rampant Raiders gave their fans a treat with an absolute thrashing of the toothless Tigers 60/6 a major statement. Jordan Rapana crossed for 4 of the 11 tries and Croker filled his boots with 20 points. Back to the drawing board for Westie coach Taylor. The Shireboys and the Blue Mountain men produced a real humdinger at Sth Cross Stadium. Outscored 4 to 3 the boot of James Maloney got the Sharkies home just 20/18. Paul Gallen heroic with an enormous 242 running metres. Soward missed a 79th minute conversion and the golden point chance.

Continued on next page...

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The Sea Eagles got DCE back and a 26/10 result over the 15th placed Knights. The Dragons got lucky over the bottom feeding Roosters. Up 18 zip at one point they had to cling on desperately for a 20/18 advantage. Several attacking chances fell agonisingly short for the Bondi boys. Cordners return looked good and the return of naughty boy Pierce could unlock a return to the winning circle soon. The Dragons travel to Mt Smart this Sunday and will arrive with confidence when they have viewed the Warriors/Storm video. The Homies look to have lost their rock in Mannering and their spark in Lolohea, both joining TVSheck in the casualty lounge... only the good lord knows how Cappy is going to turn this around. But hey with the Mighty Warriors you never know.

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ST GEORGE ILLAWARRA
DRAGONS



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Roosters Breach Notice

THE SYDNEY Roosters have been issued two breach notices, each proposing a fine of \$20,000, for incidents involving criticism of the referees at yesterday's Anzac Day match against the Dragons.

In the first incident, Roosters coach Trent Robinson allegedly approached and harassed referee Ben Cummins in the Allianz Stadium tunnel at the end of the match.

In the second incident, Mr Robinson attacked the credibility of Mr Cummins in his post-match press conference.

CEO Todd Greenberg said both incidents were potential breaches of the NRL rules and the club would have 7 days to respond to the breach notices before a final determination was made.

"We cannot stand by and allow any club to deliberately and blatantly attack our referees," Mr Greenberg said.

"Not only is it a breach of the rules which are there to protect our referees from abuse, but it sets a bad example to the rest of the game, particularly juniors.

"We know from experience that young people imitate their NRL heroes and attacking referees is simply not acceptable.

"We are also trying to encourage young people to become referees and public attacks like this do nothing to achieve that goal."

Mr Greenberg said the NRL recognised that referees, like players, make mistakes in games and it was not surprising that clubs were sometimes frustrated by calls which went against them.

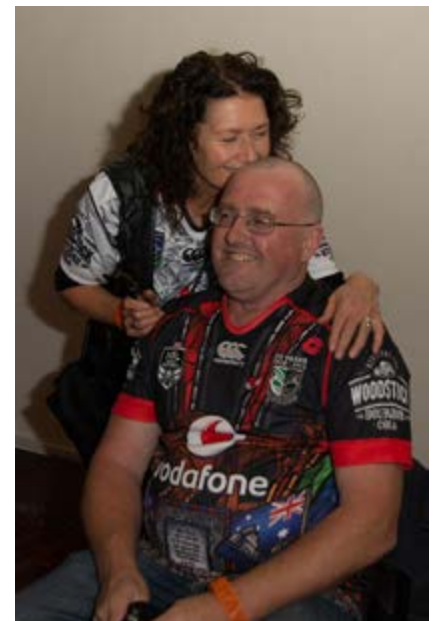
"But there are proper channels to vent those concerns and they were not followed in this instance," he said.

"Our Referees boss, Tony Archer is happy to talk to any club about issues which arise out of a game and that is the right way to address any problems."

Warriors Member from Timaru Shaves for a Good Cause

ONE OF our Members Peter Herron from Timaru (South Canterbury), shaved his head on Saturday night as a fund raiser for Leukaemia & Blood Cancer, New Zealand. Peter (individually) has so far raised \$1,900.00 with more pledges still to come. If any of you would like to give to this worthy cause, you can go on line to donate @ my.leukaemia.net.nz/peterherron, I know that I will be.

On behalf of the lounge members I donated \$500 to Peter.



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

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Changes made for Round Nine

by Richard Becht

UTILITY JAZZ Tevaga and props Albert Vete and James Gavet have been recalled while new signing Shaun Lane is set to make his Vodafone Warriors NRL debut in Sunday's ninth-round clash against St George Illawarra at Mount Smart Stadium (2.00pm kick-off; match day sponsor: Flava).

Rookie hooker-back rower Tevaga will make his fourth appearance after being used in earlier matches against Melbourne, Newcastle and the Sydney Roosters while Vete returns on a five-man bench after missing the last two rounds.

Joining them on an extended bench are Gavet – used in the first three rounds of the season – and Lane, who turned out for the club's Intrust Super Premiership side in wins over North Sydney and Newcastle. The 198cm back rower was in Melbourne as 18th man for last night's 0-42 Anzac Day loss to the Storm.

The 22-year-old former Bulldogs forward is set to become Vodafone Warrior #211 in this week's clash.

After losing first-choice fullback Roger Tuivasa-Sheck with a season-ending injury in the win over the Bulldogs, the Vodafone Warriors are now without his replacement Tuimoala Lolohea, who was forced off the field with a minor knee after only 26 minutes last night.

Lolohea is expected to be out for up to two weeks meaning David Fusitu'a will become the Vodafone Warriors' third different starting fullback in as many games.

Also ruled out is loose forward Simon Mannering who is expected to be sidelined for one or two weeks. He was forced out of last night's clash with an ugly facial wound; he had his lip stitched back together by a plastic surgeon in Melbourne last night.

Vodafone Warriors

- 1 David Fusitu'a
- 2 Jonathan Wright
- 3 Blake Ayshford
- 4 Solomone Kata
- 5 Manu Vatuvei
- 6 Thomas Leuluai
- 7 Shaun Johnson
- 8 Jacob Lillyman
- 9 Issac Luke
- 10 Ben Matulino
- 11 Bodene Thompson
- 12 Ryan Hoffman (c)
- 13 Charlie Gubb
- Interchange
- 14 Jazz Tevaga
- 15 Sam Lisone
- 16 Albert Vete
- 17 Shaun Lane
- 18 James Gavet

VODAFONE WARRIORS

v

ST GEORGE ILLAWARRA

Mount Smart Stadium, Auckland

2pm, Sunday, May 1

Gates open: 9:30am

NYC kick off: 9:45am

ISP kick off: 11:45am

NRL kick off: 2:05pm

Match Officials:

Referee: Gavin Badger, Assistant Referee: Chris Butler, Touch Judges: Rick MacFarlane & Anthony Elliot, Review Officials: Ben Galea & Jason Robinson and Senior RO: Bernard Sutton



THIS WEEK IN BIG LEAGUE'S HUGE ROUND 9 ISSUE...

Jam-packed with FEATURES and NEWS, plus columnist **ANDREW VOSS** 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

- Playing in the maroon and white is a dream come true for **Jake and Tom Trbojevic** – but don't call them the new Stewart brothers. Even though the similarities are uncanny, Jake and Tom hope to forge their own paths at the Sea Eagles. Their former coach **Geoff Toovey** calls them both supremely gifted and says Jake particularly is on the path to stardom.

- Wonder what has made the Eels pack so strong to start the year? According to **Kenny Edwards**, it has been the inclusion of 31-year-old **Beau Scott**. "Whenever he speaks blokes like me and **Manu (Ma'u)** just lap it up. When he's running blokes down and making hits, we try and jump on the back of that," Edwards says.

- Former NRL player **Denan Kemp** is still involved in the game, but not as you'd think. The 28-year-old has started a video podcast called *The Locker Room*, where he sits down and chats with players in-depth – getting never-before-heard insight into the lives of guys like **Ben Barba** and **James Segeyaro**. Kemp knows how rare a successful NRL career is and hopes to use new media to build his profile in broadcasting.

- Also, we go back in time to 1952/53, when the **New Zealand Test team** held the record for the longest winning-streak against Australia (4) – something the Kiwis can mirror; **Kevin Hastings** says the pressure on his son **Jackson** has been unfair; The Analyst picks apart **Jamie Soward's** kicking game and **Andrew Voss** says there isn't enough being done about the longevity and success of international football.

PLUS... **Michael Ennis** talks life after footy and we cringe at the Top 8 rugby league hoodoos.

AND: Little League, lower grade previews and a Ryan James poster.



THIS WEEK'S ISSUE

On sale at newsagents, supermarkets and at the ground from

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NEWSLIFEMEDIA

IN THE WARRIORS WE TRUST!



Kurt Rice made this awesome Vodafone Warriors image and sent it in. Great job Kurt.

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

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VODAFONE



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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.

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