

VODAFONE



Sir Peter Leitch Club

AT MT SMART STADIUM, HOME OF THE MIGHTY VODAFONE WARRIORS

17th August 2016

Newsletter #135



Loyal Supporters Pack the Stands to Cheer on the Vodafone Warriors Last Saturday Night



Jazz Tevaga scores a try



Manu charging away from a tackle



Shaun Johnson on the sprint

Photos courtesy of www.photosport.nz

Didn't See That Coming

By David Kemeys

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



COULD NOT score in a Sydney knocking shop, winless since about 1964, absolute rubbish until a very good showing the week before against the Melbourne Storm, and still I did not see that coming.

You could script it really, could you not?

Souths have a wealth of talent – although none of it has shown much of late, yet they belted us.

They did not just beat us, they beat up on us.

All that good work, we had not been in 80 minutes since being drubbed by the Raiders back in May, undone by a performance that was at best lacklustre, and at worst inept.

I heard a wonderful remark on Radio Sport, when a caller described his unease: “Just when you thought you could trust them,” he said...I know how he feels.

That consistency vanished.

It was like watching the side of old, the one we thought had been replaced by one that shows grit and character.

This was supposed to be a win that solidified our spot in the eight, and instead we have left ourselves with a mountain to climb.

With the Titans getting home over the Tigers, and the Panthers belting Newcastle, even the points differential went against us.

We head, to state the obvious, to Townsville where a wounded Cowboys outfit – in a three-game losing slump of their own – will be confident of getting back on track, and utterly unwilling to do us any favours.

Cowboys star Johnathan Thurston has already warned life will be very tough in Townsville – although to be fair, I suspect life is always tough in Townsville. It is not exactly Paris.

North Queensland dropped 22-10 to the Roosters in this round, and Thurston has apparently laid the law down, warning the Cowboys could miss the finals unless they snap out of their form slump, and that the switch must be hit against us.

We have to beat two of our last three opponents, the Cowboys, Tigers and Eels, at least.

The horrible part is that until the weekend, you

might have been fairly confident, with the side showing real commitment. But the haters will love this. Which side is going to turn up – the one we have come to enjoy watching recently, or the one from Saturday?

There is no point rehashing it all though. Yes it was a stinker, but it has to be put behind us.

And the man I look to is not captain Ryan Hoffman, but the man he replaced, Simon Mannering.

In a beaten side he made more tackles than any man should have to, played his guts out, and never stopped trying.

That is all you can ever ask, and the ever dependable Mannering says the loss could help galvanise us.

If Simon says it, it must be true.

“We'd been playing very consistent for a fair while and this is a few steps back on how we've been performing,” he said. “We can dwell on it, or make it a real good reality check for us and show what we can do from here, because whether teams are in contention for the eight or not, everyone's desperate to get the win. We saw that with the Bunnies.”

If we are going out, let's do it as Warriors, not Bunnies.

Tui Has One To Forget

Only a few weeks ago we were lining up to hang coach Andrew McFadden for not giving Tuimoala Lolohea more game time.

It was inexplicable that we would take him into a game and leave him on the bench.

McFadden responded that there were things about Lolohea's game the coaching staff were not entirely happy with, which the rest of us generally pooh-poohed and muttered “idiot”.

Maybe not as silly as it sounded, though hanging the shocker of Saturday night on the young fullback is over the top.

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But I doubt Tui would refuse to admit it was not his finest hour.

By the time he got dragged off, there were plenty of people baying for blood.

That's the wonderful thing about being a supporter. You don't have to be consistent, loyal or even right.

Tui, we are told every time he steps on the park, is a player of enormous potential and talent.

Yeah he did not have a great day, but he was far from the only one with defensive blemishes.

Now he has paid the price, dropped altogether.

There is more to come in this saga that is for sure.

Reynolds Cuts Loose

Possibly the most disturbing thing I read or heard after the arse-kicking, was coach Andrew McFadden's admission that we knew what to expect from the exceptional Adam Reynolds.

He had a wonderful game, kicked brilliantly and generally tormented us.

But McFadden said we were aware of the tactics we would face but could not do anything about it.

Sorry, what? That's not good enough. That's McFadden's role, alongside Justin Morgan, surely.

"They had a good plan to kick in behind us and, even though we knew that was coming, they had a desperation to get to the ball first. I don't think I saw our performance coming. It was a bit of a setback for us but we need to move forward pretty quickly."

Tommy Is On To It

The Warriors have no time to dwell on the loss because winning this weekend has to be the focus.

Anything else could spell the end of our year.

"It's obviously disappointing," Warriors five-eighth Thomas Leuluai said. "It was a bit of a shock to be honest, which is probably a sign of how far we've come. It won't be easy, but we don't have to reinvent the wheel. We know what works and we need to get back to it. It's as simple as that."

And Tommy, who has been excellent of late, and who is of course going back to the UK next year, was quick to defend Lolohea. "It's a tough position and I don't think we helped him too much there."

Credit Where It Is Due

As awful as we were, Souths were bloody excellent – buggers them. Any side that manages an 88 per cent completion rate – especially against our own 69 percent, is going to win.

Chuck in running over 200 more metres with the ball then we managed, and is it any wonder we came second?

Reynolds was outstanding, the Burgess boys came up trumps, and Greg Inglis is just plain class.

But big Ben Matulino was less charitable. "There's no reasonable excuse for it. They camped us down in our own half and we struggled to get out, they turned up and they rolled us with their physicality. We let them off the hook and they took full opportunity."

You think?

Back To Back?

The good news is that I could not tip wet cement out of a wheelbarrow, let alone NRL games, but the bad news is that I did tip the Cowboys to go back to back this year.

The good news is that they have hit a slump sure, the bad news is that I still think they will win it.

"Back-to-back is the furthest thing from our mind at the moment," Thurston said.

"Finals could be out the back door as well if we keep going the way we are. We're not fighting for the scraps. We're not urgent enough to win those little contests. We need to turn it around quick and it's going to take everyone at the club to do it. We need to fight ourselves out of this hole. It's going to take everyone to do that."

The good news is that history is against the Cowboys. Not since 1993, when the Broncos did it, has a side gone back to back.

Player Of The Year Sown Up

If David Fusitu'a is not player of the year something is wrong. I'd give it to him just for smacking Greg Bird.

The 21-year-old has made a good fist of every position he has been asked to play, and there is not a side in the NRL that would not snap your hand off to take him.

Continued on next page...

His pairing in the centres with Solomone Kata – the other bloke at least in the running for the title – shows great promise, and is well worth persisting with.

David is also an ambassador for Kidz First Children's Hospital at Middlemore, where I work, along with Manu Vatuvei, so he gets a bonus point for that.

"It was hard at the start because I had to change my mindset around my job, and it's heaps different to wing and fullback.

"Once I got my opportunity I had to take it with both hands. I'm still trying to get better every week and the tough thing about the NRL is you have to keep backing up and can't afford to have an off performance, because that hinders the team."

Stuff Up?

Great piece on Stuff.co.nz at the weekend where Dave Long, good bloke, and Christopher Reive, who I don't know from a bar of soap, debated the season.

Summing it up for you, Rieve said "maybe next year – again".

With us there or thereabouts yet again, he is in the camp that says we will fall at the last hurdle, and is thoroughly poised off about it, after all the hype at the start of the year around our signings.

"The familiar fear of missing the post-season begins to creep up on the fans," he wrote.

"Coming in to the time of the season where the pressure is at its peak, it's hard to put any trust in the Warriors."

"Of the teams fighting to secure a spot, the Warriors have one of the tougher sets of fixtures, which will see them trip up as they try to sprint toward the finish line."

Not much room for doubt there, but Long was more upbeat.

Keep in mind that he was writing before the Souths game, but he opined: "I can state with a certain degree of confidence they will not only finish in the top eight, but they can also win a game or two in the finals.

Long argued we had to win three of our last four – and after the weekend make that all our last three.

"Making the eight should be enough for Andrew McFadden to keep his job, and anything else will be

seen as a bonus. But after what looked like being an abysmal season a few months ago, it could turn out to be not a bad one after all."

All I can say is that one of them is going to be right.

Which one, we will know really soon.

Budge Goes Shopping

The other piece I liked was by Dale Budge in the Herald. There is no doubt Budge knows his stuff but it was very lengthy story where he floated the idea of which players might be on our shopping list, and some of them were interesting, some were insightful, and some were just plain hilarious.

But it was a good fun piece and an excellent talking point.

Budge argues that we are likely to add only one significant new signing. With Konrad Hurrell, Ben Henry and Thomas Leuluai all done, the rest of the signings will be "low end".

Another Wright or Allwood anyone?

The piece was far too long to repeat so I have broken it down for you, and picked out a few of note.

Interesting: Nelson Asofa-Solomona (Storm): Can play in the front row and back row. Off-contract. Crossing the Tasman would make sense. Kenny Bromwich (Storm): Off contract. He could be a handy acquisition. Tony Williams (Bulldogs): T-Rex signed from Manly but has failed to deliver.

You can keep T-Rex, but I wouldn't be broken-hearted to have either of the other two.

Insightful: Aiden Guerra (Roosters): Struggled for form. Not cheap but Origin experience is appealing. Sam Moea (Roosters): Off contract and we could use some extra beef up front. Jack Reed (Broncos): Injured and rumoured to be departing and is one of the best defensive centres around.

Make me a happy man and bring Reed. Good player.

Out of left field: Josh Hoffman (Titans): The word is he has been told he's free to negotiate. Can play centre, wing or fullback and has played for Kiwis. David Mead (Titans): Looking likely to leave. Can play in the centres, wing or at fullback. Paul Vaughan (Raiders): Struggling to make the 17 and the Raiders have great forward depth. A mobile big man.

I'd happily take any of them, but I can't see it, especially not anyone with eyes on the fullback slot.

Hilarious: Ben Hannant (Broncos), Thomas Burgess (Souths), Greg Eastwood (Dogs), Robbie Farrah (Tigers), Benji Marshall (Dragons). All mentioned as outside bets.

Fun ideas to float but never going to happen.



Happy Birthday Shane

By Sir Peter Leitch

SOMETIMES I am reminded of why I love the game of league, and Sunday was one of those times.

I had the great pleasure of attending the 70th birthday of a genuine good bloke – Shane Dowsett. If it were not for league, I would never have had my life so enriched by knowing Shane.

Now let me tell you, Shane has had the great honour of pulling on the Kiwis jersey, he played more times during 25 years at Otahuhu - with 13 of those in the premier grade, and the majority as captain – than anyone can count.

He went on to play for Auckland and as I said, reached the pinnacle of league success by also playing and touring with the Kiwis in the early 1970s.

During his time at Otahuhu he played in five Fox Memorial finals, the last three as captain, oh, and his side won the lot.

He became captain in 1975 and that turned out to be an amazing year for Otahuhu, the Leopards winning every trophy in the Auckland Rugby League calendar, something that remains to this day the club's most successful season ever.

He might not be a household name, but someone who is, the great Graham Lowe, even persuaded Shane out of retirement to come back and co-captain with another legend of our game, Mark Graham, when the Leopards had hit a tough spot, losing four in a row.

Shane and Mark turned it around, the Leopards winning every other game that season and taking another Fox title.

Murray Deaker once did an interview with Graham on Sky and asked who the toughest guy he'd ever played against was? Mark couldn't answer, but did reply: "I know the toughest guy I ever played with....

Shane Dowsett."

He was renowned for his fierce defence, toughness, fitness, bloody-mindedness and a lack of fear that meant he was always willing to put his body on the line.

I know he regarded his own injury list, 20 broken bones, both knees bugged, a shoulder shot, and his jaw and nose frequently smashed, as a badge of honour.

So it was an honour for me to share his birthday.

And don't think he is one of those blokes who had it easy. He's currently battling dementia and Alzheimers, something that first showed up when he was only 58. But he's faced those problems with the same courage he showed on the field, and I can genuinely say I am bloody proud to count him as a mate.

Happy birthday once again Shane, and thanks for being one of the good people the great game of league has brought me into contact with.





I'm Happy to Help

By Sir Peter Leitch

I GOT A lovely note from Rino Wilkinson of Nga Iwi FM, thanking me for stuff for the Auction Race Night, held to support Paeroa Bluelight.

It's a great fundraiser, put together by volunteers, back Bluelight's youth events, the That's Us Marching Ladies who off to the nationals in Nelson, and Paeroa College's girls' soccer team, who are in Auckland next month for a big tournament.

It was great to hear it was such a success-night, with each group getting \$3700, and the total raised passing \$11,000.

Just so you know, the autographed Auckland Nines jersey went to Tony Coombe of Coombe & Associates for \$900, the signed seph Parker glove found a home with Jack Kimura of Huntly Placemaker's for \$840, and my autographed book -What a Ride Mate sold to Constable Brett Otto, who chairs Paeroa Bluelight, for \$200.

But the big prize turned out to be a trip to our lounge for the Vodafone Warriors v Rabbitohs, which went for a whopping \$2200 to the owner of the local McDonald's, who grabbed it for his operations manager. Pretty good boss!

And thanks Rino for letting me know.



Tony Coombe the lucky bidder for the Auckland NRL Nines autographed jersey.

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In Stacey Jones Lounge



Ali Lauitiiti and Toafofoa Sipley with Simon Smith.



Butch interviews the legend Ali Lauitiiti.



Catherine Bain from Christchurch who said it was the best night of her life.



Craig Hobbs a smiling Souths Supporter from Sydney.



Darryl and Dave from Christchurch.



Frank Endacott Jr in middle with Ray and Luke. Frank is son of the great Kiwi coach Frank Endacott Sr.



John Swan travelled from Aussie to support the Rabbitohs. He gave it to Butch after the game.



Kero Rupene, Lauren Hurley and Andrew Marsh flew up from Dunedin.



Lorraine McKee wins the sports bet \$50 on Tui Lolohea first try scorer from George Popplewell of the TAB.



Peter Smart from New Plymouth who is a Waitara Bears supporter.



Simon Smith suffered bad burns when injured in a stock car crash.



Stuart Lancaster ex English Rugby Union coach.

More Stacey Jones Lounge Action



The Three Musketeers from Taranaki.



Toafofoa Sipley talks to Sir Peter.



The Austin Powers Show Adam Worth, Lee Whitehead, Neil Saxton, Ben, Allan and Handsome Steve Whitehead.



Tonci Jakicevich who's Father owns Glengarry Wines. Tonci's Father has been very supportive of the Mad Butcher Luncheons for many years. A great family.



Vili Vunamasi a West Tigers supporter who played the game very well in the lounge.



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



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KIWI - Living -

Check out Kiwi Living next Tuesday
the 23rd of August on TV One at
7.30PM

Monty Betham and Sir Peter Leitch have a
story they filmed airing.

Newest Life Member Humbled by Recognition

By Grant Chapman - NZRL Communications Manager



IF YOU ever hear Sir Peter Leitch speak publicly, you should brace yourself for some pretty colourful language to say the least.

Except, it seems, on those occasions when he is being honoured for his contributions to rugby league.

The long-time supporter of our great game certainly turned on the charm for his induction as an NZRL life member today, paying a heartfelt tribute to the distinguished company he was joining.

“I think we’re all the same,” said Sir Peter. “We don’t do what we do in rugby league for recognition, we do it because we love the game.”

“My journey in rugby league started, really, in Rosella Rd, Mangere, when the local club asked if I would sponsor them.

“One day, I went down to the club, they were my kind of people, working-class people, and my love of the game grew from there.

“I’ve had so many good times, made so many good friends and had so many good journeys. This is just an honour and a privilege.”

The NZRL patron is not always so softly spoken, but his influence on rugby league administrators is always valuable and, in his own way, he has helped shape the game we know today at domestic, professional and international levels.

“Peter is not shy to give advice and will always tell you the things you don’t necessarily want to hear, but it’s done in a way that’s actually for the good of the game,” observed NZRL chairman Garry Fissenden. “I’ve had my share of that and am grateful for it.

“He’s an incredibly effective communicator and, for a not-so-young member, he’s not afraid of new technology. Sir Peter’s Facebook posts from the Kiwis’ UK tour last year were legendary and I’ve watched sunsets from Waiheke Island that I would never have seen if it wasn’t for him, but not too many sunrises.”

In ratifying Sir Peter’s selection, the NZRL life membership panel agreed to adjust its previous criteria and make a special case for his inclusion, testimony to the tremendous contribution he has made across all aspects of the game.

“The other side of Sir Peter that we don’t see, but we

hear a lot about is the things he does in the community, over and above rugby league,” said awards panel convenor Ray Haffenden.

“From Kaitia to Bluff, the word you would hear about Sir Peter is that he is prepared to help ANY-ONE. That word “anyone” covers it, because he will help everybody from every walk of life, but we just happen to be so really, really lucky that he is involved in our sport.”

New Zealand Rugby League now has 17 life members:

John Bray
Jim Campbell
Ray Cranch
Allen Gore
Cathy Friend
Ray Haffenden
Don Hammond
Peter Kerridge

Sir Peter Leitch
Bud Lisle
Trevor Maxwell
Tom McKeown
Sel Pearson
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Valerie

By Phil Gifford

THE FIRST time I met Valerie Adams was in December, 2009.

When Peter Leitch (he wasn't Sir Peter then) asked me if I'd like to interview Valerie on stage at his Mad Butcher's Christmas charity lunch, I nearly jumped down the phone saying "yes."

It was one of the great experiences of my life. As I wrote at the time in the Sunday Star, "Valerie's never swum comfortably with the media tide, yet, as a sell-out audience who recently gave her a standing ovation at a charity lunch at Ellerslie discovered, she has a diamond clear honesty, a keen sense of humour, and is unafraid to express genuine, personal emotion.

"I was lucky enough to be asked to quiz her on stage, and found the force and depth of her personality extraordinary.

"The game face of Valerie, which, at the Olympics last year included a look that screamed 'do you feel lucky punk?' to her rivals, is impressive, but it also conceals how funny she can be.

"Asked about Tiger Woods, and how she might have reacted in his wife's shoes, she laughs and says, 'I'd be collecting his life insurance right now.'"

There was also an electric moment that revealed the tender heart behind the fearless athlete. The charity for the lunch, who received a cheque for \$100,000, was the South Auckland Hospice, where Valerie's mother died in Valerie's arms when Val was 15.

I asked Val before we spoke if, given the charity, if it would be okay if I asked her about her own experience with the hospice. It'd be fine, she said.

On stage we'd held eye contact for most of the discussion, but when it came to the hospice question I looked down, concentrating in an effort to phrase the question properly. When I looked up, to my horror, a tear was slowly running down her cheek. "I'll be okay," she whispered, and, after a deep breath she told of how kind the staff at the hospice had been to her mother and her family.

In the years since my wife Jan and I have had the massively good fortune to have Valerie become an integral part of our lives. She jokes and calls us her "token white parents", we call her "our baby girl." Val and I wrote a book together in 2012, and we were

involved in her wedding this year to Gabriel Price, whose support for her has been heart warming to see.

Valerie's had some amazing triumphs. Two Olympic golds, four world championships, being awarded the world female athlete of the year in 2014.

But I've never been more proud of her than when she won the silver medal in Rio.

It was something of a miracle she was there at all. She had to undergo major surgery on her right elbow, her throwing arm, to be able to compete at all.

Her work ethic, always extraordinary, has been even greater in the last 12 months. When she and Gabriel married there was no honeymoon. Two days after the wedding they were flying off to the chill of Switzerland so she could dig deeper in training with her coach Jean-Pierre Egger.

For five years from 2010, until Gabriel joined her there this year, Valerie basically put her life on hold, living alone in Switzerland, so lonely that when she was first there she would literally cry herself to sleep at night.

That's why, knowing how much she's given to her sport, wanting so desperately for her to win, the first words that came out of my mouth when Michelle Carter stunned us all with the throw that won gold would have made the Butcher blush.

Valerie, on the other hand, showed the grace under pressure that makes her such a wonderful person.

Don't just take my word. The next time you see Sir Peter, if you ask him if he agrees with me that Valerie is one of our greatest New Zealanders, I bet he says "yes".





By John Coffey QSM
Author of ten rugby league books, Christchurch Press sports writer (44 years), NZ correspondent for Rugby League Week (Australia) and Open Rugby (England)

World Cup Hero to Retire

Bulldogs' Sam Perrett runs the ball during the Round 7 NRL match.
Photo www.photosport.nz

CANTERBURY BULLDOGS and 2007-2013 Kiwis outside back Sam Perrett should be doubly proud of the reaction he received to his announcement that he will retire at the end of the season. Not only have commentators praised his whole-hearted contributions during 255 first-grade games for the Bulldogs and Sydney Roosters, plus 21 Test matches, but they have also lauded him as a highly respected personality away from the playing field.

Born in Auckland 31 years ago and raised on the Gold Coast, Perrett represented Australian Schoolboys before pledging his allegiance to New Zealand. He recently revealed he literally found his way to rugby league by accident: "I used to cruise around on my skateboard," he said. "That is what I loved to do. Then I started hurting myself too much so I decided to go to rugby league." The Roosters were first to spot the potential of the Burleigh Bears junior.

Ben Ikin, on the NRL360 television show, recalled his first sighting of Perrett at an NRL rookie camp. The youngsters were asked questions and told to give their answers by standing on one side of the room or the other. "Most just went with the herd but six or seven times Sam stood on one side of the room on his own," said Ikin. "He had strength of character from the moment he walked into the NRL. Players love playing with him and coaches trust him."

It took time for Perrett to find his feet. He debuted for the Roosters in 2004, only to suffer an ankle injury which sidelined him for six weeks. Limited to three appearances in 2005, it was not until 2006 he became a regular first grader. Though best known as a wing, he has also performed creditably at centre and as an accomplished fullback this season when Will Hopoate opted out of Sunday games because of his religious beliefs.

A Kiwis call-up followed in 2007, with Perrett playing fullback in all three Tests on tour against Great Britain and one against France. The results were disappointing but Perrett had done more than enough to be retained. He went on to share in two of our greatest triumphs, the 2008 World Cup and 2010 Four Nations victories. In 2009 he equalled the record for most tries (three) in a Test against France and, in all, touched down 12 times in his 21 Tests.

At 93kg and 1.79m, Perrett is dwarfed by most NRL players, even by those who also ply their trade on the wing. But he has earned a proud reputation as one of the game's most elusive, not to mention fearless, dummy half runners. It still takes a pretty slick defence to trap him near his goal-line. Nor have there been any doubts about Perrett's finishing skills. The try he scored for the Bulldogs against Manly last Thursday night was the ninety-second of his career.

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But there was one inexplicable hiccup during Perrett's progress. Midway through the 2012 season, after 148 games for the Roosters, coach Brian Smith decided Perrett was surplus to requirements and released him. Bulldogs coach Des Hasler quickly snapped him up and has never regretted it. While the Roosters sank to finish thirteenth, and then parted company with Smith, the Bulldogs played their way through to the 2012 grand final where Perrett scored their only try in a 4-14 loss to Melbourne.

Perrett had previously played in the Roosters' 2010 grand final loss to St George Illawarra and he was fullback when the Bulldogs went down to South Sydney in the 2014 premiership decider. While the recent Semi Radra controversy was raging amid rumours the Fijian and Kangaroos wing could earn \$2 million in French rugby union, Perrett was asked whether he would be tempted by such riches. He replied that a grand final winner's ring would be worth much more to him.

Now Perrett has one last chance to do a lap of honour on Grand Final Day with the Bulldogs well positioned to go deep into the play-offs. Slippery Sam showed he was true to his word to "give everything to get that title" by putting through the precision grubber kick which led to Josh Reynolds' winning try in golden point extra time against Manly last Thursday. With an eye to the future, Perrett has been building a successful property development business.

Footnote: The Bulldogs will also lose centre Curtis Rona at season's end. Originally from Taranaki, the 24-year-old Rona was brought up in Western Australia, wants to return there, and has signed for the Western Force rugby union club. Rona was in the Kiwis squad in to Britain late last year but did not get on the field. The Bulldogs will still have the Morris twins as their left side attack but need to replace Perrett and Rona on the right flank for 2017.

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Evenly Matched Teams

By Barry Ross



THIS SEASON has been one of the tightest for many years. Teams are evenly matched and there are many close games each round as well as favoured teams being beaten. So far in 2016 there have been 15 Golden Point games in the 184 club matches played. That is more than eight percent and already a fifty percent increase in the number played last year. In 2015, there were 10 Golden Point games and in 2014 just four. Back in 2011 and 2012 there were 10 Golden Point games but we still have three rounds to play so the number could finish near 20 for 2016.

As well as this, there have been 42 matches in 2016 which have been decided by five points or less. This statistic shows that around one quarter of all NRL matches played this year have gone down to the wire. This will probably continue in the final three rounds, as well as in the big end of season games on the way to the Grand Final.

The Gold Coast Titans are set for a great crowd at their home ground on Saturday week, 27 August. After the Hayne plane sank the Wests Tigers with his last minute field goal last Saturday, the Titans will feel they can finish in the top eight teams. At the moment they sit in eighth position and take on bottom placed Newcastle at Newcastle this coming Saturday afternoon at Newcastle. Then comes the home clash with Penrith who are also chasing a top eight position. When he made his debut for the Titans at their home ground in the 24-14 loss to the Warriors on Sunday 7 August, the biggest Gold Coast crowd for seven years came to watch their new signing. This crowd was 25,109 and if the Titans defeat Newcastle as expected this week, the house full figure of 27,400 at Cbus Super Stadium could be reached. Hayne's stats against the Tigers showed he is already contributing to the team. He ran for 145 metres in 12 runs, made 15 tackles and provided one try assist in the Tigers game, but it was the ice cool field goal that put the big smile on the face of Titans, CEO, Graham Annesley. A crowd of 16,783 was in attendance at Leichhardt Oval for the game and this was the biggest figure at the ground since 2011. Hayne is certainly a drawcard and no doubt this will continue in the remaining games he plays this year, both at home and away.

What about St. George/Illawarra on Saturday night? They deserved their 32-18 win over the Sharks. The Dragons outmuscled their opponents and had all League fans wondering where has this been hiding all season. I hear negotiations are well under way for the WIN Corporation to buy 50 percent of St. George/Illawarra. If the deal goes ahead, WIN will purchase Illawarra's share of the joint venture team, with St. George retaining the other 50 percent. The Sharks have come back to earth in the past few weeks after being tipped by many as the minor premiers and even the Grand Final winner. They are still well placed to finish as one of the top two teams but have two tough games from their last three. They meet the rejuvenated South Sydney on Monday night at ANZ Stadium and as the Warriors now know, this will be no picnic. Michael Maguire and his team will believe they can finish the season on a high with four successive wins. The 41-22 victory over the Warriors showed that Souths are playing near their best and they meet the Sharks, Newcastle and the Bulldogs to complete their 2016 commitments. As well as Souths, the Sharks play the Roosters at home and finish with a tough away game in Melbourne with the Storm. This could be the minor premiership decider but even if it is not, Craig Bellamy will have the Storm ready to rip in.

The Warriors loss to Souths could be costly and they have to redeem themselves in Townsville this Saturday. The Cowboys will be fired up as they will be facing a fourth successive defeat after going down to the Storm, Tigers and Roosters in their last three matches. Paul Green and his team will be very aware that they will have to beat the Warriors, Bulldogs and Titans in their last three games to have any chance of finishing in the top four.

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



By Ben Francis

James Fisher-Harris set for Kiwis Call Up



James Fisher-Harris is tackled during the match between the Junior Kiwis and the Junior Kangaroos on the Gold Coast, Australia, May 2, 2015.

Photo www.photosport.nz

IF YOU told Panthers rookie James Fisher-Harris at the start of the season that he would be in the Kiwis squad for this year's Four Nations, he wouldn't have believed you.

It appears Fisher-Harris could be in Stephen Kearney's plans for the yearly competition after a standout season which has included its setback.

The 20 year old was a surprise inclusion in the Panthers first game of the season against the Canberra Raiders. Despite only playing 18 minutes, Fisher-Harris kept his spot in the squad keeping fellow Kiwi Elijah Taylor out of the starting 17.

Taylor has since moved to the West Tigers.

After his first game, Fisher Harris has seen increased minutes which has included three 80 minute games with an average of 46 minutes per game. The youngster also includes an average 21 tackles per game and 62 running metres a game.

The great performances was rewarded with a contact extension through to 2019 back in June.

Despite the positives Fisher-Harris has had some setbacks which included missed out on captaining the Junior Kiwis earlier on the year due to injury and also a fractured thumb.

After everything Fisher-Harris has dealt with a Kiwis call up would be a great way to end a rewarding season.

"He (Kearney) just said that he's been watching me, that I'd been going good and to keep improving, Fisher-Harris told AAP,

"It's good to get that phone call, especially after not being able to play in the Juniors game"

Panthers General Manager Phill Gould has applauded the youngster from Rawene saying he sees a bright future for him the NRL.

"Despite the fact James has only played a handful of NRL matches, we are extremely confident in his potential."

After a season which has seen Fisher-Harris explode onto the scene as one of the most promising rookies in the game, I would definitely not be surprised if Kearney selects the youngster in his squad for next year's Rugby League World Cup.



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

The Mad Butchers Weekly NRL Tipping Comp.

By John Holloway

NRL Round 24

		Sue Phelan	Joe Vagana	John Coffey	Fast Eddie	Monty Betham	Bill Hayward	High-Tackle Holloway
		<i>Maloney's Barber Shop - The best haircut in town.</i>	<i>League Legend and Machine Lease King.</i>	<i>Newsletter Columnist and Veteran Leagueie</i>	<i>Devonport Dutchman - Takin it easy...</i>	<i>The Warrior Boxer - StepsForLife</i>	<i>Link Business - Buying or Selling a Business</i>	<i>Richmond Bulldog - Old School Richmond Leagueie</i>
Date/ Venue	Game							
18/08 - Suncorp	Broncos v Bulldogs	Bulldogs	Bulldogs	Broncos	Broncos	Broncos	Bulldogs	Broncos
19/08 - Pepper	Panthers v Tigers	Panthers	Panthers	Panthers	Panthers	Panthers	Panthers	Panthers
20/08 - Hunter	Knights v Titans	Titans	Titans	Titans	Knights	Titans	Titans	Titans
20/08 - Brookvale	Sea Eagles v Storm	Sea Eagles	Storm	Storm	Storm	Storm	Storm	Storm
20/08 - 1330Smiles	Cowboys v Warriors	Warriors	Warriors	Warriors	Warriors	Warriors	Warriors	Warriors
21/08 - GIO	Raiders v Eels	Raiders	Raiders	Raiders	Raiders	Raiders	Raiders	Raiders
21/08 - ALLIANZ	Roosters v Dragons	Roosters	Roosters	Roosters	Roosters	Roosters	Dragons	Roosters
22/08 - ANZ	Rabbitohs v Sharks	Sharks	Rabbitohs	Sharks	Sharks	Sharks	Sharks	Sharks

How they're traveling....

Picks last week	3/8	5/8	3/8	3/8	4/8	3/8	4/8
Total picks	101/170	102/170	112/170	103/170	103/170	114/170	119/170

AND THE carnage continues. The cantering Cowboys and the shonky Sharks and even the stuttering Storm suffer setbacks with each coach claiming revival is on the way but you would have to say others are emerging to centre stage. The Roosters are in 15th place on the Ladder but have got their mojo back and are having fun spoiling the party for others, in this instance the brokeback Cowboys 22/10. The man leaguies call the Worlds best footy player "JT" is suddenly looking a long way short of sublime. Likewise the Rabbits (13th) are bouncing back and fast becoming the business end bananaskin for top 8 aspirants in this case the worrisome Warriors. Then there are the Dragons sitting 11th but dealing it to the 2nd placed CronullaShire 32/18 where the hell did that come from. It looks like a bit of a choke for Flanagans flagging flashboys. The bustling Bulldogs got past the Sea Eagles 20/16. Dessys dazzlers are looking good without setting the world on fire but did enough to put the Seasideers firmly out of the finals race for this year. Bronco Boss Clint Bennett got something to smile about at last with highly rated halves Hunt and Milford finally earning their pay. He reckoned that his team were due to turn the corner and this might be it slicing the enigmatic Eels 38/16. The Titans got back in the winners circle with the Hayne planes last minute heroics trapping the Tigers 19/18. Can the SuperStar take them all the way? Maybe not but he has got a few sweating. Salt in the Westies wounds with Teddyboy Tedesco jaw-broken for the season and a major blow for Coach Taylors tyros. The prowling Panthers prevailed as expected knocking out the Knights 42/6 a big help to the points diff in a tight ladder tussle. They will make the 8 in my humble opinion and perhaps cause more than a ripple. The Monday niter was the star attraction with the tabletop Storm away to the fast rising Raiders. A great game to watch and the Green Machines terrific defensive display backing their usual suspects big back attack was too much for the Melbournians 22/8 a decisive result.

Continued on next page...

Continued from previous page...

I will say it again the Sticky Rickys boys from the Capital are on the Charge and will take some stopping. Leilua is a monster and Rapana unstoppable, with the guidance and excellence of Captain Croker, these 3 in particular present a clear and present danger. Not to mention the canny pom Hodgson and hardmen Whitehead, Papalii and Soliola. Be told and Beware. Round 24 will tell a tale I reckon with a few games being very relevant to table positioning. Ie Broncos (6) v bulldogs (4), Panthers (7) v Tigers (10) and of greatest interest to us Homies Cowboys (5) vs Warriors (9). We need to get past either the Panthers or the Titans while keeping the Tigers tucked in behind. Go the Mighty Warriors!!

The latest swirl in the Sydney rumour mill has Kieran Foran coming our way next year.... Big Jimmy Doyle is a personal friend/mentor to the troubled Kiwi and in a public statement neither confirms nor denies this move.... Let's see how that pans out.

Tippin Talk: Malo Big Joe Vagana leading the pack this week with a 5, given the upset results this is a real achievement. The rest of us staying tight with 4s and 3s, High-tackle still the front-runner overall. Come on team step it up or eat my dust!

NSW Cup Game Recap

By Joe Williams - NSW Cup Team Manager

THE INTRUST Super Premiership NSW Vodafone Warriors side have fell to their third straight loss losing to the Canterbury Bulldogs 22-14 at Belmore Sportsground over the weekend after their fourth straight travel.

This loss has resulted in the Vodafone Warriors slipping now from third to sole fourth on the table due to other results over the weekend. The Stacey Jones coached team went into halftime 4-2 down after defending their line multiple times throughout the half.

Straight after halftime the Warriors let in too many tries which made it hard to fight back into the game. Tries from Viliami Kaveinga and John Palavi right on fulltime left the score line at 22-14 to the Bulldogs.

The Warriors now finish off the season with two home games starting with this weekend against top of the table Mounties at Mt Smart Stadium #1, a must win to keep them in the top four.

Key Details:

- **Date: Saturday 20th August**
- **Venue: Mt Smart Stadium no. 1**
- **Gates Open: 12:45 pm**
- **Intrust Super Premiership NSW: 1:00 pm Kick Off**

PARKING: Public parking available in main car park. Entry via Maurice Road

ENTRY: Free Entry via Gate B

SEATING: Supporters to be seated in Lower West

Auckland Rugby League will be holding an event on Mt Smart no. 2 – with a number of finals being players including Fox Memorial, Sharman Cup.

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



By John Deaker

Drysdale's Slim Victory was Huge for NZ



Mahe Drysdale with silver medalist Damir Martin of Croatia (left) and bronze medalist Ondrej Synek of the Czech Republic. Photo www.photosport.nz

THEY SAY there's a fine line between success and failure in sport and it's often accentuated at the elite level. A prime example of this came with Mahe Drysdale's gold medal performance at the Olympics this week. His victory in rowing's single skull event not only saved him personally from the disappointment of getting a worse result than he had in London but it also came at a crucial time when New Zealand was in danger of our 2016 Olympic team being renowned as 'serial silver medalists.'

That would have been sad for many reasons, the most obvious being that a silver medal at the Olympics is something that should always be celebrated regardless of what people's expectations are. Most sports fans rate Olympic silver medals much higher than Commonwealth Games gold medals and some even rate them higher than gold medals in people's respective world championship events.

There's no doubt that silver medals are easier to 'accept' by the athletes and fans if the result exceeds what they expected going in to the event. Luuka Jones, our silver medalist in the canoe slalom was a typical example of this. She'd been ranked way down the field going into her competition so it wasn't surprising to see her jumping for joy on the podium after she'd received her medal.

In contrast, it was hard not to feel sorry for Valerie Adams which she missed out on winning gold, particularly when American Michelle Carter had only moved into first place with her final throw. The fact that Val accepted second place so gracefully (unlike when she'd initially been beaten by a drug-cheat in 2012) probably helped the nation to accept her second placing as a great achievement - as opposed to perceiving it as her failing to come first.

I traditionally don't get as excited about rowing medals as I do about success in sports like track and field. However, the significance of Drysdale's gold medal and the guts and determination he showed to get over the line first means I'll remember his gold medal as one of the most special Kiwi moments from any Olympic games dating back to the first Olympics I watched back in 1984.

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



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Title Rivals on Early Collision Course

By Grant Chapman - NZRL Communications Manager



LAST YEAR'S premiership finalists are set for an early showdown at the 2016 NZRL National Secondary Schools Tournament later this month.

Eleven months ago, traditional powerhouse St Paul's College and outsiders Otahuhu College played out a thrilling finish to the title game, with Otahuhu captain Komiti Vetenotu calmly kicking a conversion after the final hooter for an 18-17 win.

But the South Aucklanders have not shown that form so far this season, falling to Auckland's second-tier pennant competition, while St Paul's will attempt to defend their district crown tomorrow against newcomers Wesley College.

The NSST draw sees titleholders Otahuhu and top seeds St Paul's grouped together in Pool A, where they are due to meet on Day Two (Tuesday, August 30) at Papakura's Bruce Pulman Park.

Aorere College and Manukura School from Palmerston North, 11th and 12th respectively last year, round out that pool.

After winning 15 of the first 19 national tournaments, including seven consecutively from 2004-10, St Paul's have not raised the trophy since 2012 and have lost the last two finals, so they'll be itching to climb the podium again.

Pool B also sets up an early rematch of 2013 finalists Kelston Boys High School and Mt Albert Grammar, with Whangarei Boys High School and Manurewa High School standing between them and the semi-finals.

Reigning development champions Wesley step up to the top grade in Pool C, but will be tested by Southern Cross Campus College, Tokoroa High School and Aranui High School, who placed seventh, eighth and 10th last year.

In Pool D, Avondale College have been another big surprise of the Auckland College Rugby League competition, and face a stern test from 2015 NSST semi-finalists Tamaki College, Westlake Boys High School (sixth) and development-grade runners-up St Thomas of Canterbury.

2014 development winners Papatoetoe High School will contest that grade again, after their 13th placing in the premiership last year.

Both the development and premiership finals will be shown live on SKY Sport on Friday, September 2.

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Reader Mail

PHOENIX CHORUS, the senior choir from Ashburton College, has just returned from Australia following great success at the Australia national Performing Arts competition – Glee! 2016. The 25-strong choir, under Musical Director Jo Castelow, won a bronze medal in the Secondary Large Teams Down Tempo section with ‘For the Glory’, a song from the musical ‘The Civil War’. They followed this up with a gold medal and an Australian national title in the Secondary Large Teams Up Tempo section with ‘Haven’t met you yet’, an upbeat a cappella version of the song made famous by Michael Buble. In winning this title, Phoenix Chorus posted the highest score in the entire Glee! Competition.

Four of our Year 13 girls competed in the Secondary Small Teams Down Tempo section. The team consisting of Lucy Clough, Libby Clark-Higson, Gabrielle Stringer and Annelise Diamond won gold for their a cappella version of the theme song from the TV series, ‘Home Fires’.

In the Secondary Glee! Soloists section it was a clean sweep for Ashburton College as our girls took out all the medals! Gold went to Samantha McArthur for an emotionally-charged and very polished performance portraying the character Nancy from the musical ‘Oliver’ singing ‘As long as he needs me’. The silver medal went to Lucy Clough who was hilariously funny playing the character Glinda from the musical ‘Wicked’ singing ‘Popular’. The bronze medal went to Libby Clark-Higson with a very powerful performance of the hit song ‘Hold me in your heart’.

There were over 2500 competitors in the competition which was held in the Gold Coast Exhibition

and Conference Centre. Ashburton College was the only school from New Zealand but participated with performers from throughout Australia. The students were complimented on several occasions by Roxanne Thew, the event director, for their polite and gracious manner and their professionalism on and off the stage. We were so very proud of them!

It was a great thrill for the students to meet up with the Warriors at the airport. We had just been catching up on the news about their good win on the Gold Coast (free wifi at the airport!!). The choir enjoyed doing a flash mob performance of their gold medal winning a cappella song and were stoked when the Warriors players took pictures and congratulated them.

We look forward to continued success from both of our teams!

Kind regard Carolyn Clough

Ashburton College Phoenix Chorus Choral Manager



Bonjour mon ami

JUST WANT to give big ups to Sir Peter & Simon Mannering for this sweet as jersey. I will be wearing it with pride! Allez les Warriors! Love the newsletters !!!!!!!!!!!

Andy Bentley
Duras
France





Hi,

THANKS SO much for the most amazing jersey I won in the last draw! Unfortunately (for me) it was a little on the small to fit me but my 19 year old son is thrilled beyond measure to have gained it (photo attached). He has worn it with pride several times already. He is also looking forward to wearing it when he visits his old StarJam group in Wellington next month. The theme for their get together this term is 'colours' & Lee is very proud to show what colours he supports!

Many Thanks again,

Michelle Dennison

Hi Peter

HOPE YOU had an uneventful trip home and I am sorry that we did not have time to catch up on your trip to the gold coast last week.

I am attaching the photo we took when you bought me the signed Warriors jersey.

Best wishes and hope to see you next visit,

Regards

Geoff (Gold Coast)



JACKSON, WHO comes to the Stacey Jones Lounge at MT Smart every home game, was blown away. He got to meet Issac Luke after his mighty Mt Albert Lions's Under 7's played Glenora Bears at Duck Park last Saturday. All the kids thought it was "fantastic" to have Issac at the ground.



WE ARE Simon Smith and Denise Heaven from Palmerston North. We are here as guests of SirPeter. Sir Peter has followed Simons progress since his horrific accident. 30% burns to his body after being trapped in his Stockcar on the 7th October 2015. Simon was emergency air lifted to Lower Hutt then onto Middlemore National Burns unit. It was from here that Sir Peter heard of Simons plight. Sir Peter has taken a huge interest in Simons recovery from then. What an amazing man. The support he has passed onto Simon is an insiparation and truely shows what an amazing man Sir Peter is. Simon is now 10months into his recovery still a long way to go but considering he only just survived after 8 days on life support and in an induced coma he has come a long way. Sir Peters support has been a huge inspiration to Simon and myself.



Hi Sir Peter,

I WANTED TO thank you for your humbling welcoming and allowing us to enjoy the great evening with you and the many other strong warrior supporters. (even though our beloved Warriors lost)

It is a night that we all will remember for a life time with the laughter and wittiness of your PC talking was outstanding.

Out of our 11 we had 7 different styles of Warriors jerseys was mean.

You are a true gentlemen with a fantastic heart taking the time to meet, greet and host to people you have never known and just make us so welcome like all Warrior supporters are part of you wider Whanau.

I hope you will some day wear the Hukanui Rugby League Hoody I left with your beautiful wife. You were busy so I just asked if she could pass onto you later, she said 3xl would fit you haha. It was a small appreciation of what you had given us for the night.

I am looking forward to coming back to Mt Smart in a couple of weeks to support our Hukanui U8s and U6s who are pre match entertainment. Our kids and parents love being part of the atmosphere and the memories shared for our club.

If you do wear the hoody please send me a pick so I can add to our facebook page LOL show our loyal members LOL.

Once again thank you very much for allowing us to have a fantastic night.

Ps We gave our guy shit for talking in your whare when you were speaking like you say mate when your in my house you respect my rules and there was only 1 simple rule. Shut the F up when I talking LOL

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Faith – is Belief

Passion – is pride

Regard

Raymond Edwards



Coaching Made Easy

With Graham Lowe

ONZM, QSM

FROM U6 TO STATE OF ORIGIN

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DATE: 24 September 2016

TIME: 6pm

VENUE: Orewa Arts and Events Center, Riverside Road, Orewa. - **VENUE CHANGE**

COST: \$50 per person

CONTACT: Barbara Wheto, **0276368815** or **bwheto@gmail.com**

This is a fundraising event for Hibiscus Coast Raiders Netball and we do hope you will give it your full support.

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Team named
for trip
to North
Queensland

by Richard Becht

DAVID FUSITU'A switches to fullback, Blake Ayshford returns to the centres and James Gavet comes onto the interchange for the Vodafone Warriors' 24th-round NRL match against North Queensland at 1300SMILES Stadium in Townsville on Saturday (7.30pm kick-off local time; 9.30pm NZT).

After three appearances in the centres, Fusitu'a reverts to the custodian's role where he performed with aplomb in the previous four games.

Making way for him is Tuimoala Lolohea, who has been named to start at standoff for the club's Intrust Super Premiership side against the Mounties at Mount Smart Stadium on Saturday.

"Tui has done a good job for us at fullback during the season but it's a really difficult position to play, probably the most difficult in the game," said Vodafone Warriors head coach Andrew McFadden.

"He needs to get some confidence back in his game as well as having the chance to play in his preferred spot in the halves.

"At the same time David has shown his ability in all the positions in the outside backs. He's been great on the wing and in the centres while he also brings a lot to the side at fullback."

With Ayshford moving off the bench to start in the centres – where he was used in the first 18 rounds this season – prop James Gavet comes onto the bench for his ninth NRL game of the year.

VODAFONE WARRIORS

- 1 David FUSITU'A
- 2 Ken MAUMALO
- 3 Blake AYSHFORD
- 4 Solomone KATA
- 5 Manu VATUVEI
- 6 Thomas LEULUAI
- 7 Shaun JOHNSON
- 8 Jacob LILLYMAN
- 9 Jazz TEVAGA
- 10 Albert VETE
- 11 Bodene THOMPSON
- 12 Ryan HOFFMAN (c)
- 13 Simon MANNERING

Interchange

- 14 Nathaniel ROACHE
- 15 Sam LISONE
- 16 Ben MATULINO
- 17 James GAVET
- 20 Bunty AFOA

VODAFONE WARRIORS

v

NORTH QUEENSLAND COWBOYS

1300SMILES Stadium, Townsville

7.30pm, Saturday, August 20



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DATE: SATURDAY, AUGUST 20
VENUE: 1300SMILES STADIUM
KICK-OFF: 7.30PM
REFEREE: ASHLEY KLEIN
ASSISTANT REFEREE: ADAM GEE
TOUCH JUDGES: BRETT SUTTON & NICK MOREL
SENIOR REVIEW OFFICIAL: BERNARD SUTTON
REVIEW OFFICIALS: BEN GALEA & STEVE CHIDDY
FOX SPORTS: LIVE 7.30PM
LIVE RADIO: 2GB, ABC

#NRLCowboysWarriors					
P	T	G	PTS		P T G PTS
21	4	0*	17	Lachlan COOTE	1 David FUSITU'A 15 11 0 44
18	10	0	40	Kyle FELDT	2 Ken MAUMALO 8 1 0 4
19	9	0	36	Justin O'NEILL	3 Blake AYSHFORD 21 8 0 32
18	5	0	20	Kane LINNETT	4 Solomone KATA 20 14 0 56
20	11	0	44	Antonio WINTERSTEIN	5 Manu VATUVEI 12 5 0 20
16	7	0	28	Michael MORGAN	6 Thomas LEULUAI 15 3 0 12
18	2	73*	155	Johnathan THURSTON (C)	7 Shaun JOHNSON 21 10 41* 123
19	2	0	8	Matt SCOTT (C)	8 Jacob LILLYMAN 19 1 0 4
6	2	0	8	Ray THOMPSON	9 Jazz TEVAGA 11 1 0 4
19	1	0	4	James TAMOU	10 Albert VETE 12 2 0 8
20	7	0	28	Gavin COOPER	11 Bodene THOMPSON 15 5 0 20
21	7	7	42	Ethan LOWE	12 Ryan HOFFMAN (C) 20 1 0 4
21	4	0	16	Jason TAUMALOLO	13 Simon MANNERING 19 2 0 8
INTERCHANGE					
20	1	0	4	Rory KOSTJASYN	14 Nathaniel ROACHE 9 0 0 0
2	1	0	4	Coen HESS	15 Sam LISONE 18 0 0 0
21	2	0	8	Scott BOLTON	16 Ben MATULINO 20 1 0 4
9	0	0	0	Patrick KAUFUSI	17 James GAVET 8 0 0 0

20 Bunty AFOA

*Field Goals: L Coote 1, J Thurston 1

*Field Goals: S Johnson 1

COACHES

Paul GREEN Andrew McFADDEN

PENALTIES				SCRUMS			
1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	13	14	15	16

PENALTIES				SCRUMS			
1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	13	14	15	16

	COWBOYS	WARRIORS
Position (Points)	5th (28)	9th (24)
Points For	494	445
Points Against	317	475

ATTACK		
Tries	83	82
Completions	77%	76%
Tries 0-20m	60	58
Tries 21-50m	21	15
Tries 51-100m	2	9

DEFENCE		
Tries	51	82
Tries 0-20m	36	51
Tries 21-50m	3	19
Tries 51-100m	12	12

MATCH AVERAGES		
Tries Scored	4	4
Tries Conceded	2	4
Points Scored	24	21
Points Conceded	15	23
Hit Ups/Runs	181	175
Tackles	316	307
Metres Gained	1622	1531
Handling Errors	4	5
Offloads	7	9
Line-breaks	4	5
Goalkicking	85%	73%

HEAD-TO-HEAD
 Played 35, Warriors 18, North Queensland 17

AT 1300SMILES STADIUM
 Played 16, North Queensland 11, Warriors 5

WINNING FORM 2016
NORTH QLD: WLWLWWWLWLWLWBWLLBWL L Streak - 3 losses
WARRIORS: LLLWLWLWLLBWWWLWLLWLL Streak - 1 loss

PAST 8 CLASHES
 2015 - NORTH QLD D. WARRIORS 50-16 at Mt Smart Stadium;
 NORTH QLD D. WARRIORS 28-24 at 1300SMILES Stadium.
 2014 - WARRIORS D. NORTH QLD 20-16 at 1300SMILES Stadium.
 2013 - WARRIORS D. NORTH QLD 20-18 at Mt Smart Stadium.
 2012 - NORTH QLD D. WARRIORS 52-12 at Dairy Farmers Stadium;
 WARRIORS D. NORTH QLD 35-18 at Mt Smart Stadium.
 2011 - WARRIORS D. NORTH QLD 18-6 at Mt Smart Stadium;
 NORTH QLD D. WARRIORS 30-10 at Dairy Farmers Stadium.

BIGGEST HEAD-TO-HEAD WINS
 NORTH QLD D. WARRIORS 52-12 at Dairy Farmers Stadium, 2012.
 AUCKLAND D. NORTH QLD 52-6 at Ericsson Stadium, 1996.

NEXT CLASH
 NORTH QLD v Canterbury at Belmore, 7.50pm Thursday, August 25
 WARRIORS v Wests Tigers at Mt Smart, 2pm Sunday, August 28

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NRL Preview

by DAVID MIDDLETON
@Middleton_David



HOLDEN CUP

DATE: SATURDAY, AUGUST 20 VENUE: 1300SMILES STADIUM
KICK-OFF: 5.15PM REFEREE: LIAM KENNEDY
TOUCH JUDGES: WYATT RAYMOND & JACK EBERT

Pressure building on defending Premiers



THOMAS LEULUAI

2
line-break
assists in
Round 23

1300SMILES Stadium
Saturday 7.30pm

Form: The Cowboys are reeling after losing successive matches to the Storm, Wests Tigers and Roosters and their chances of finishing in the top four are looking dubious. Johnathan Thurston and his team-mates are looking tired after a long period of high-level performance and the dream of winning back-to-back titles is beginning to fade. The Warriors remain the game's most enigmatic outfit, emerging from a series of narrow losses to shade the Panthers and Titans in successive matches before stumbling against South Sydney last Saturday.

History: The travel demands required for this encounter have meant the home side regularly finishes on top, with only a handful of exceptions. The Cowboys won in Auckland in Round 24 last year while the Warriors claimed an upset victory in Townsville in 2014.

Danger sign: The Cowboys have lost only once at home this season and will be desperate to return to winning form after their three-game losing sequence. Johnathan Thurston was especially animated while addressing his players last Sunday and he will demand an improved performance this week.

Best Bet? Look for the Cowboys to open with a try as First Scoring Play.

Money-spinner: Options for First Tryscorer include Antonio Winterstein, Justin O'Neill and Kyle Feldt.

CASUALTY WARD

COWBOYS: Ben Hannant (knee)/Jake Granville (hand) – indefinite. **WARRIORS:** Issac Luke (knee) – Rd 26; Charlie Gubb (susp.) – Finals Wk 1; Roger Tuivasa-Sheck (ACL)/Sione Lousi (ACL) – season.

COWBOYS V WARRIORS

Kalyn PONGA	1	Kane TELEA
Gideon GELA-MOSBY	2	Lewis SOOSEMEA
Bacho SALAM	3	Melino FINEANGANOFU
Enari TUALA	4	Junior PAUGA
Marcus JENSEN	5	Matt FAITOTOA
Ty CARUCCI	6	Ata HINGANO
Cooper BAMBLING (C)	7	Chanel HARRIS-TAVITA
Darryn SCHONIG	8	Kenese KENESE
Brandon SMITH	9	Sheldon PITAMA (C)
Ross BELLA	10	Mattais HEIMULI
Cody MAUGHAN	11	Joseph VUNA
Hiale ROYCROFT	12	Marata NIUKORE
Tahanui TUTAVAKE	13	Chris SIO
14 Nathan TRAILL		14 Tyler MOHI
15 Corey HORSBURGH		15 Cyrus TIMO-LATU
16 Kaleb FUIMAONO		16 Joseph PRICE
17 Nick LUI-TOSO		17 Jerome MAMEA
Aaron PAYNE		Kelvin WRIGHT

HEAVY BLOW...

The Cowboys have dropped to third after the Roosters beat them 42-24. Ty Carucci (pictured) recorded the first points of the day 12 minutes in after Brandon Smith offloaded and sent him through a hole to score – but the Cowboys still trailed by two after a back-and-forth first half. The second-half roll-on from the Roosters was too much for the away side, who were outscored 24-8. Brandon Smith impressed with 96 metres and eight tackle breaks, but the team will hope to reverse their poor recent form.



LETTING IT SLIP... A late run by South Sydney hurt the Warriors' faint finals chances as they went down 30-20. The Warriors led 14-12 at the break and extended the lead when Sheldon Pitama scored in the 60th minute, but a late three-try surge from the Rabbitohs proved too much for the home team. Prop Kenese Kenese led from the front, making three tackle-breaks and 135 metres, but the Warriors now need other results to go favourably and to win their remaining games to have a slim chance of making the finals.

– SAM PASFIELD

HEAD-TO-HEAD LEADERS

AVERAGE METRES	AVERAGE TACKLES	LINE-BREAKS
Roger Tuivasa-Sheck 176	Simon Mannering 47	Shaun Johnson 14
Jason Taumalolo 163	Bodene Thompson 40	Tuimoala Lolohea 14
David Fusitu'a 140	Ethan Lowe 33	Solomone Kata 13
Ken Maumalo 138	Jake Granville 31	David Fusitu'a 13
Antonio Winterstein 137	Gavin Cooper 31	Antonio Winterstein 10



FANTASY POINTS
Bodene Thompson 57.4
Simon Mannering 55.5
Shaun Johnson 54.4
Ethan Lowe 49.5
Jason Taumalolo 49.0

North Queensland – LAST RESULT

Lost 22-10 v Sydney Roosters

Tryscorers: Ethan Lowe, Kane Linnett.
Team: Lachlan Coote, Kyle Feldt, Justin O'Neill, Kane Linnett, Javid Bowen, Michael Morgan, Johnathan Thurston, Matthew Scott, Rory Kostjasyn, James Tamou, Gavin Cooper, Ethan Lowe, Jason Taumalolo. **Interchange:** Ray Thompson, John Asiata, Scott Bolton, Patrick Kaufusi.

Warriors – LAST RESULT

Lost 41-22 v South Sydney

Tryscorers: Solomone Kata (2), Manu Vatuvei, Jazz Tevaga.
Team: Tuimoala Lolohea, Ken Maumalo, David Fusitu'a, Solomone Kata, Manu Vatuvei, Thomas Leuluai, Shaun Johnson, Jacob Lillyman, Jazz Tevaga, Albert Vete, Bodene Thompson, Ryan Hoffman, Simon Mannering. **Interchange:** Nathaniel Roche, Sam Lisone, Ben Matulino, Blake Ayshford.

PHOTOS: NRLPhotos.com; Shane Wenzlick (Leuluai), Scott Davis (Carucci)

This is what you miss out on when you don't subscribe to Big League Magazine

From the West Coast of the South Island.

Left is May Foster of the Runanga club. Middle is Kath and Brian Aynsley (club president of Brunner Bulls). And right is Jimmy foster, the groundsman of the Runanga club. Other pic is our under 14s.



OUR TWO grandkids Everlee and Christian Rivers thoroughly enjoyed the Warriors/Titans game and were excited to meet you.

They are treasuring their jerseys with the team signatures on and have been buzzing ever since about coming face to face with the team members.

Everlee and Christian both play number 10 for the Beenleigh Lions, Everlee plays in the under 14's and Christian plays in the under 8's. Everlee was selected to play in the South Coast Regional team last year and this year played in the All Girls Challenge hosted by the Sunshine Coast Junior Rugby League at Currimundi on the Sunshine Coast. There were over 400 girls playing In the All Girls Challenge with teams from as far way as the Northern Territory.

I have attached some photo's as you suggested. The photo of Christian was taken at the end of a game Beenleigh Lions vs Logan Brothers and the photo of Everlee playing in the All Girls Challenge.

Great to catch up with you,.. Ken.



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

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