

VODAFONE



Sir Peter Leitch Club

AT MT SMART STADIUM, HOME OF THE MIGHTY VODAFONE WARRIORS

24th August 2016

Newsletter #136

Vodafone Warriors v Cowboys



Manu Vatuvei keeps on pushing



Manu Vatuvei sizes up the opposition



Ryan Hoffman on the run



Shuan Johnson looks to offload.



Thomas Leuluai goes for the ball



Loyal Warriors Supporters at the Game

Photos courtesy of www.photosport.nz



WHEN WE got dusted by Souths you could have written the script about what would happen the following weekend when we lugged our sorry arses all the way to Townsville.

Hands up anyone who did not see that coming?

Having to win – realistically – to keep our chances of finals footy alive, it was always, always going to be a tough battle up against a North Queensland Cowboys side that was desperate to play itself back into form. And so it proved.

We are alive – though there are discussions going on about turning off the life-support. We must win our last two and hope the Titans lose both theirs.

If it was not a tough enough assignment, we lost Solomone Kata before the game, with Matt Allwood coming in to make his fourth NRL appearance of the season.

If you wanted any more evidence that coach Andrew McFadden has lost all patience and faith in Tuimoala Lolohea, despite his repeated protestations that he hasn't, that was it.

Allwood might be a great bloke, a superb trainer, whatever. But he isn't good enough to play for us – and we all know we have too many who fit that description.

Searching for a positive, you would have to give a pass mark to Warrior No 214, Ata Hingano, who at just 19 made his debut for us and played well.

Quite why he came in for such a crucial match to replace Jazz Tevaga is another question. I've given up trying to figure out what goes on in McFadden's mind.

Now our chances hang by the slimmest of threads, smashed 34-6 and never having looked likely.

The worst bloody thing is that all the haters will be rubbing their hands together with glee and bleating on about how we always fade at the business end of the season.

It's difficult to take, and it's even worse because we know it's true.

Was it not made public that McFadden had to make the eight, or at least prove the side is heading in the

right direction? Significant progress I think was the phrase used.

After the debacle against Souths, and the capitulation against the Cowboys, he must be nervous.

It's not losing - plenty do that in Townsville- it's the manner of it, in both weeks come to that.

Against Souths we were awful, against the Cowboys, better but still second by some distance.

Poor Simon Mannering made another staggering 42 million tackles but even he must be starting to wonder why he bothers. The Cowboys didn't just feed off our errors, they feasted.

But I will hang in there to the bitter end – and I suspect it will be bitter, but that's not something we haven't got used to.

We have the Tigers and Eels to end our season, both at home, while the Titans have the Panthers and Cowboys, so it is not impossible the Gold Coast outfit will lose both those.

But even if they do, and we win, do you really believe we can make an impact in the finals?

It looks like we will again fail to play in September. All we ask is that our side gives everything and proves that the shirt matters to them.

But ask yourself – and yes, we did suffer some cruel injury blows and a mountain of other issues during the year - if we are better than we have been, or if we are going in the right direction?

Finishing in the top eight has to be the minimum, surely. But again, ask yourself how far off Melbourne, Brisbane, Cronulla or the Cowboys we are.

Looks a big gap doesn't it?



More on the on next page...

Finals Off Limits

Warriors coach Andrew McFadden has apparently said the finals will not be discussed as we look to breathe life into our ailing season.

Fair enough. But can he ask his players where the attitude, commitment and effort that we saw for a couple of months has gone, because that's all I want to see. I actually don't expect to win all the time – though I am a bit harder to please about playing at Mt Smart.

We witnessed nine weeks where we won six and lost three – all in golden point. Then we put in two absolute stinkers. What's that about?

I'd like to claim I have lost count of the number of tries we have conceded in the last fortnight, but I haven't – it's 12.

That's awful, and even then it could be worse, because the already mentioned Mannering, and Thomas Leuluai, have put on a master class of defending your line at times.

So McFadden says we can only focus on finishing the season strongly and hoping the Titans fall.

“There's still hope but it's not within our hands. We're going to have to rely on results and with two home games we want to finish strong. What will happen will happen. We don't have a crystal ball.”

Mistakes Cost

When we had our revival, we could all see that ball retention was good, completion rates sound, and the effort all round was there. But in the last couple of weeks we have made more mistakes than a dyslexic butcher (sorry Pete) in an essay-writing contest.

McFadden reckons it's all down to a lack of attention to detail. Well bloody well fix it then, you're the coach!

“It's just down to individual concentration. You've just got to put a bit more attention on it. They know how to catch and they know how to carry, it's got nothing to do with the mental fatigue. It's just individuals not thinking on the field.”

Back In Business

The Broncos have got back on track, and now the Cowboys. Astute readers will recall I have written a couple of times about my belief the Cowboys will be the first side in ages to go back-to-back, and even though they suffered a mini loss of form, nothing has changed.

Any side with Jason Taumalolo in it has got a head-start if you ask me. He was outstanding on Saturday.

And the Cowboys have Johnathan Thurston. Does one man really make that much difference? Yes, if it's someone of the quality of that bloke.

During the week he fair lashed his teammates for being tactically dumb in recent weeks and it certainly worked.

The belting snapped their three-match losing streak, and will have given them plenty of confidence ahead of their next outing, against Canterbury on Thursday night. Win and they will go back to fourth.

“We needed a change in attitude and we got it,” Cowboys coach Paul Green said. “Losing can become a habit, so it's good to get some confidence back.”

More on the on next page...

Papers Cane Us

Interesting to catch up with what the Aussie papers had to say. The Courier Mail summed us well – if cruelly. “The Warriors looked dangerous ... for about five minutes. Their bright start quickly degenerated into sheer incompetence.”

Even more fun was reading the comments, because Cowboy fans clearly don't rate us.

Over-inflated victory. Anyone could have pumped the Warriors, one fan wrote.

You can hardly say belting the Warriors at home is any indication. The Warriors were pumped by Souths, who hadn't won for weeks, last week, another pointed out.

Foran Saga Rolls On

People talk a lot of crap about Kieran Foran coming to the Warriors.

Quite apart from the fact the poor bloke has a lot on his plate, and may not be in state to play, there is the obvious question of money – and the salary cap.

Even if he agreed to come to Penrose for nothing, the NRL can attach a notional value to him.

That means if the NRL says he is a \$million player, you have to count that towards your salary cap, even if you aren't paying it.

It's a bit hard to get your head around, but it is supposed to keep the competition even and stop sides from stacking their teams by claiming they are only paying peanuts for some players.

Then factor in the NRL actually registering him.

He would have to show his personal difficulties are behind him, and that he can handle the pressure.

I don't care if the bloke is the best league player on Earth. Give him some space. He has had a terrible time, and I for one, delighted as I would be to have him, don't want to see the guy's health put at risk.



The advertisement features five Vodafone Warriors players in their black and red jerseys. The player in the center is replaced by a white silhouette with a large red question mark. A white banner with red text reads "#BACK THE BOYS @WENDYSNZ". Below this, a black box with white text says "BE IN TO WIN A CORPORATE BOX EXPERIENCE WITH YOUR MATES AND LOADS MORE PRIZES." To the right, a list of four steps is provided: 1. FIND OUR VODAFONE WARRIORS CUT-OUT INSTORE. 2. TAKE A PHOTO WITH THE BOYS. 3. UPLOAD IT TO INSTAGRAM. 4. TAG @WENDYSNZ WITH #BACKTHEBOYS. The Wendy's logo is in the bottom right corner, with "OFFICIAL SPONSOR" written below it. At the bottom left, it says "T&CS APPLY, CHECK OUT WENDYS.CO.NZ TO FIND OUT MORE."

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Tuimavave Off to Wembley

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)



FORMER VODAFONE Warriors inside back Carlos Tuimavave is poised to step onto British rugby league's biggest stage when his Hull FC club takes on Warrington in the Challenge Cup final at the new Wembley Stadium on Sunday morning (NZ time). Veteran Kiwis forwards Sika Manu and Frank Pritchard – now the captains of Tonga and Samoa, respectively -- are also expected to be in the Hull squad, extending New Zealand's long association with the Cup.

The knock-out competition was introduced in 1896, just the second season after the Northern Union had broken away from the autocratic England Rugby Union after a long dispute over compensating players for time off work. The final gained national significance when moved to London's old Wembley Stadium in 1929. Auckland wing Lou Brown and Waikato and Canterbury forward Len Mason were in the Wigan team which beat Dewsbury 13-2 on that auspicious day.

Although the more powerful professional clubs inevitably dominate the later rounds, the cup offers amateur teams an opportunity to take on the best their game has to offer. David has occasionally beaten Goliath in the early rounds, but there have also been many lop-sided scores. However, a big part of rugby league's rich folklore in the north of England has been woven around the visits of clubs such as Wigan, St Helens and Leeds to the humble homes of the minnows.

Just as Brown and Mason were with Wigan for that original Wembley final, another two New Zealanders in 1998 played significant roles in what is regarded as the biggest Cup final upset of all time. West Coast and Canterbury centre Whetu Taewa, who had also featured as a wing in the Auckland Warriors' Winfield Cup debut three years earlier, and Auckland stand-off half Dave Watson helped the humble Sheffield Eagles soar to a shock 17-8 victory over mighty Wigan.

And Wigan had truly been mighty during the previous decade, winning an unprecedented eight consecutive finals from 1988 to 1995. Dean Bell was at centre or loose forward for the first seven of those triumphs. Kevin Iro played in the first four, brother Tony Iro in the first two and the late Adrian Shelford in the first three. Frano Botica gained five winners' medals from 1991, Sam Panapa and Va'aiga Tuigamala collected two apiece and Henry Paul won in 1995. Ironically, Kevin Iro was back at Wembley in 1995, but in the losing Leeds side.

Mercurial West Coast stand-off Ces Mountford, nicknamed the Blackball Bullet, spearheaded Wigan to victories in 1948 and 1951 and then coached Warrington in 1954. After a 4-4 draw at Wembley, Mountford's men beat Halifax 8-4 in the midweek replay at Odsal Stadium in Bradford. The official attendance was a world record 102,569, though as many as 20,000 more fans clambered over or broke down the fences surrounding Odsal's vast amphitheatre.

Other New Zealanders have also earned special niches in Cup history. In 1984 Kevin Tamati gained bragging rights over cousin Howie Tamati when Widnes got the better of Wigan 19-6. Howie, ever a gentleman, reckoned Kevin should have been Man of the Match. The 1985 final, when Wigan beat Hull 28-24, is generally rated as the greatest final of them all. Kiwis Danny Campbell and Graeme West were in the Wigan pack that day, up against Hull's quartet of brilliant backs, James Leuluai, Fred Ah Kuoi, Gary Kemble and Dane O'Hara.

In fact, every Cup final since 1946 has had a New Zealand connection, whether there were any players from this country on the field or not, because the Man of the Match receives the Lance Todd Trophy. It was presented in memory of outstanding Aucklander Lance Todd, who joined Wigan after touring Britain with the 1907-08 All Golds. Fittingly, he played in the 1911 Cup final. Todd later fashioned a brilliant career as manager of Salford and as a broadcaster before being killed in a road accident during the Second World War.

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Mountford, still a legend in Wigan, was the first of Todd's countrymen to win "his" trophy, when Wigan beat Barrow in 1951. Bell followed when loose forward for Wigan against Widnes in 1993. He has been succeeded by Robbie Paul (scrum-half in the losing Bradford team against St Helens in 1996), brother Henry Paul (stand-off half for Bradford against Leeds in 2000) and prop Jeff Lima, who scored two tries for Wigan against Leeds in 2011.

Although Hull FC has won the Challenge Cup three times (and as long ago as 1914, when it beat Wakefield Trinity at Halifax) it has never triumphed at Wembley in six attempts. Its other wins were in a 1982 replay at Elland Road and at Cardiff in 2005 during the Wembley rebuild. Hull was a founder member of the Northern Union in 1895, 30 years after it was formed, and played at the unique Boulevard ground until 2002 when it moved to the new KC Stadium. O'Hara and Kiwis hooker Richard Swain are numbered among its club captains.

Formed in 1879 and also an original Northern Union club, Warrington won the Cup eight times between 1905 and 2012. Wilderspool was Warrington's traditional venue from 1881 until it transferred to the new Halliwell Jones Stadium in 2004. There are no Kiwis in its current squad, which has benefited from pairing Chris Sandow and Kurt Gidley in the halves and injecting another Australian, Ashton Sims, into the forward pack. The Cup final will be telecast live on Sky Sport 4 on Sunday from 1.30am, with a replay on Sky Sport 3 at 11am.



Carlos Tuimavave playing against Manly Sea Eagles in a NSW Cup Match. 27 July 2014. Photo www.photosport.nz

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By John Deaker



Is Usain Bolt Now the Most Recognizable Sportsman in the World?

Usain Bolt after the mens 200m final. Photo www.photosport.co.nz

UNDOUBTEDLY ONE of the features of the Rio Olympics was Usain Bolt securing 3 gold medals. It put the icing on the cake of a career that will see him remembered as not only one of the greatest sportspeople of all time but also one of the most charismatic figures we've seen in world sport.

Bolt has never denied the fact that he loves to party as much as he loves winning races and though his stunning performances on the track speak for themselves his personality helps to make him be even more of a revered figure than he might otherwise be.

It was inevitable in this day and age that reports would quickly filter through of how Bolt had celebrated his success at Rio. The only surprising aspect of these reports was that a woman ended up in bed with Bolt who claimed she didn't know who Bolt was!

On Sunday morning Jady Duarte shared pictures on Whats App of her in bed with Bolt, but the Daily Mail reported that: 'Speaking to local newspaper Extra, Duarte said that Bolt sent security over to get her attention [at a nightclub]. She said she hadn't realized that she was with a famous athlete and described their nocturnal encounter as 'normal' and 'not a big deal.'

I've heard some classic stories over the years of people (particularly females) genuinely not recognizing famous sportpeople but this one takes the cake! If Duarte didn't recognize Bolt following the amount of attention he'd have attracted in Brazil that week then she needs to spend a lot less time partying and a bit more time reading the paper, or just engaging herself with ANY form of media!

It does get you thinking about Bolt's place now on the world stage; Is he the most recognizable sportsman in the world?

The fact that Bolt is rumoured to have just signed a lifetime deal with Nike (the first Nike have ever agreed to of that length) worth \$30 million a year suggests they view him as more marketable than anyone else on the planet.

It's hard for us to gauge the amount of impact Bolt has made in vastly populated areas like Africa, China and India but certainly you'd think the Africans love of running would have ensured Bolt has made more of an impact there than even some of the greatest footballers on the planet have done.

Strictly looking for RECOGNIZABLE figures that might give Bolt a run for his money, it's hard to look past football's rock-star Cristiano Ronaldo as someone who'd be right up there with him. Ronaldo of course has that 'Beckham-factor' that sees many females recognizing him who have very little interest in sport.

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Tiger Woods is probably still not far off being one the most recognizable figures despite his long period out of the spotlight. He has the advantage of doing well in a sport that consistently engages people from a much wider age-group than Bolt is able to touch. You don't hear of many people modeling their running stride on Bolt but there's millions of people who at some stage have tried to emulate aspects of Tiger Woods golf game.

Lance Armstrong is another man who'd probably still be one of the more recognizable sporting faces on the planet because of the large amount of people he was able to engage with over a long period.

Americans would like to think that Michael Phelps and Lebron James are two of the most recognizable faces though they might find that Serena Williams would give them both a run for their money , not just within the United States but also internationally.

It would also be interesting to gauge how people like Bolt and Woods stack up against the most famous people round the world like President Obama.

When we talk New Zealanders, Stephen Adams is possibly already our most recognizable athlete internationally. The fact that he's 7 feet tall might also help to make it pretty hard for people to walk past him in the street without at least THINKING they just saw someone famous!



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Kids Combo for Saturday's Game against the Tigers

The Vodafone Warriors are offering a kids' combo at this Sunday's game against the Tigers. Fans can get either some nuggets, chips and a Vodafone Warriors drink bottle for \$6 or mini hotdogs, chips and a Vodafone Warriors drink bottle for the same price.

The drink bottles are limited to the first 500 so they'll need to get in quick.

The VODAFONE WARRIORS have a signing session at the Pop Up Store in Hunters Plaza. THURSDAY 1ST SEPTEMBER FROM 6-7 PM

Players Attending: Issac Luke, Ben Henry, Solomone Kata, Jazz Tevaga and The Mad Butcher

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Three Kiwis to Push for Gold in 2020

By Ben Francis



NEW ZEALAND claimed 18 medals at the Rio Olympics, the most it has ever won at a single Olympics beating its previous best of 13 which was achieved in Seoul, 1988 and also in London, 2012.

Four golds, nine silvers and five bronze medals add up to New Zealand's total of 18.

Looking ahead to the next Olympics which is over 1400 days away which will be host in Tokyo, 2020 - New Zealand's prospects of turning some of the bronzes and silvers into golds is looks promising.

Eliza McCartney

The 19-year old entered the Rio Olympics with sights set of meadling in Tokyo. Pole problems and some nerves showed during qualifying, but she soared over the qualifying mark to reach the final. In the final, McCartney cleared 4.5m, 4.6m, 4.7m, and 4.8m all on her first attempts before nerves settled in and she could not get over the 4.85m. McCartney tied her personal best in the final and wining bronze was remarkable for a 19-year old. With four years to improve, McCartney will have a massive chance at pushing for gold. She can only improve.



Tom Walsh

The builder from Timaru stepped up when it was needed most to win bronze. The 24-year old threw 21.36m on his fifth throw in the final. It was New Zealand's first medal by a male in a field event. The winning throw was 22.52m (Olympic record) by American Ryan Crouser, which was a much bigger throw, but Walsh has time to grow and has the potential to match Crouser very soon. Walsh's fourth attempt looked to be 22m but it was called back for a foul. Fellow Shot-putting Kiwi Jacko Gill finished ninth overall on a broken foot and will also be seeking a medal in Tokyo.



Dylan Schmidt

New Zealand's first trampolinist to compete at the Olympic games since the sport was added in 2000 did very well in his first Olympics and the youngest competing in the event. The 19-year old finished seventh in the final with a score of 57.140. The winning score was 61.745 by Uladzislau Hancharau from Belarus. Last year, Schmidt finished ninth at the world championships and 15th the previous year. Like Eliza McCartney, Schmidt has always targeted Tokyo to make his mark, and the way he has progressed over the last two years, surely a medal is in the question in four years time.



Photos courtesy of www.photosport.nz





ANZ STADIUM had a crowd of 65,328 when the All Blacks belted the Wallabies last Saturday and they are expecting a similar figure when a major American Gridiron game is held this coming Saturday at the same venue. The match is between the University of Hawaii and the University of California Golden Bears in a proper competition game. It is the opening game of the NCAA Division I FBS College football season. FBS Universities are limited to 85 football players. The 190 members of the University of Hawaii group arrived in Sydney on Sunday, while the University of California contingent arrived from San Francisco on the same day. The home ground of the University of Hawaii is Aloha Stadium in Honolulu and it holds around 50,000 people, while the University of California play at the California Memorial Stadium across the Bay Bridge from San Francisco at Berkeley and this venue holds around 63,000. The Uni of Hawaii have a new head coach this season, Nick Rolovich and he will be keen to begin with a win. The Uni of California's head coach, Sonny Dykes has been in his job since 2012. Both coaches have a staff of around 17 to assist them. The match will be televised live back to both Hawaii and the USA Mainland by the USPN network. The teams will play for the Sydney Cup which was provided by the Foxtel network in Sydney.

No doubt both teams will bring many of their supporters to Australia for the match. This will be an economic windfall to the Sydney business scene. No doubt the American accent will be heard in numerous Sydney pubs, restaurants and hotels for the next week or so.

The University of Hawaii will have one Australian born player in their squad and there is a chance there could be two more.

Maxwell Hendrie a 193 cms and 112 kgs defensive line man, completed school at the Sydney GPS school, Scots College in 2014. That year Scots won the prestigious Sydney GPS first XV rugby championship and Maxwell was a key member of this team. He is in the Hawaii team for Saturday's match. There is a possibility that Hawaii could use Stan Gaudion and Ben Scruton, who both come from Melbourne, in Sydney. These two young men are a chance of being given a gridiron scholarship, probably as punters or kickers.

Way back in 1982, the University of Hawaii scouts recruited Paul Sironen, now 51, who played 23 Rugby League Tests for Australia from the Balmain club, Brett Gale, now 52 who captained the 1981 Australian Schools Rugby League team and Colin Scotts, now 53, who represented Australian Schools at Rugby Union. Sironen and Gale became homesick and didn't play any Gridiron games for the University of Hawaii, but Scotts did and went on to play professional NFL football for the St. Louis Cardinals and Houston Oilers, as a defensive linesman..

On 7 August 1999, at the same venue in Sydney, ANZ Stadium, a crowd of 73,811 turned up to see two American NFL teams play a pre-season exhibition game. In this match the Denver Broncos 20 defeated the San Diego Chargers 17. During the Second World War, American servicemen played matches in several Australian cities, with a couple of these games drawing crowds of around 20,000 or more.

On the current Australian sporting scene, Gridiron, or NFL football is quite popular throughout Australia and attracts good TV rating figures during the American season, each weekend for Foxtel. As well as Rugby League, many other sports will be well represented in the crowd this Saturday and if the weather is fine, a crowd of 60,000 plus will probably be in attendance. ANZ Stadium is very progressive and are always looking to expand their horizon regarding what they stage at their venue. In July next year they have Arsenal football team playing two matches there and this will be the first time in 40 years that the Gunners have played in Sydney. ANZ Stadium are to be congratulated for their initiative in staging these many different sports at their venue, which is located in the geographical centre of Sydney, at Homebush.

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With just two games to play and three Premiership points out of the top eight, it will be tough for the Warriors to reach the play-offs. But where there is life there is hope. A win in their last two games, both at home, against the Tigers and the Eels, while at the same time if the Titans are beaten by the Panthers and the Cowboys, will bring the desired result. Coach McFadden and his team will be very aware of this situation and the players will respond this Sunday. They will need to, as the Tigers will probably not play as badly as they did last Friday night in their 40-10 loss to the Panthers.

Raiders captain, Jarrod Croker, continued his excellent form this year, with an outstanding display in his side's 28-18 win over the Eels on Sunday. He scored a try and landed two goals, as well as setting up another two tries. This season he has scored 248 points from 16 tries and 92 goals. This is a long way ahead of the second man on this year's individual point scoring list, James Maloney who has 172 points for the Sharks. Croker has now scored 1,378 points in his 186 first grade game career. The Raiders play Manly and the Tigers in their last two games and could grab second place from the Sharks who meet the Roosters at home and then the Storm in Melbourne.

The Warriors Intrust Super Cup team played well against competition leaders, Mounties, on Saturday. Although they were beaten 38-30, they pushed the Mounties all the way. Now in fifth place, they meet ninth placed Penrith in their last regular season game at home this week and should win. They will then play in the eight team final series. Congratulations to Marshall Lino for scoring 117 points so far this year.



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

The Mad Butchers Weekly NRL Tipping Comp.

By John Holloway

NRL Round 25

		Sue Phelan	Joe Vagana	John Coffey	Fast Eddie	Monty Betham	Bill Hayward	High-Tackle Holloway
Date/ Venue	Game	<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>
25/08 - Belmore	Bulldogs v Cowboys	Bulldogs	Bulldogs	Cowboys	Bulldogs	Bulldogs	Bulldogs	Bulldogs
26/08 - AAMI	Storm v Broncos	Broncos	Storm	Storm	Storm	Storm	Storm	Storm
27/08 - Brookvale	Sea Eagles v Raiders	Raiders	Sea Eagles	Raiders	Raiders	Raiders	Raiders	Raiders
27/08 - CBus	Titans v Panthers	Titans	Panthers	Panthers	Titans	Panthers	Panthers	Panthers
27/08 - Sth Cross	Sharks v Roosters	Roosters	Sharks	Sharks	Sharks	Roosters	Roosters	Roosters
28/08 - Mt Smart	Warriors v Tigers	Warriors	Warriors	Warriors	Warriors	Warriors	Warriors	Warriors
28/08 - Hunter	Knights v Rabbitohs	Rabbitohs	Rabbitohs	Rabbitohs	Rabbitohs	Rabbitohs	Rabbitohs	Rabbitohs
29/08 - Pirtek	Eels v Dragons	Eels	Eels	Eels	Eels	Eels	Eels	Eels

How they're traveling....

Picks last week	4/8	6/8	6/8	5/8	6/8	4/8	6/8
Total picks	105/178	108/178	118/178	108/178	115/178	118/178	125/178

Tippin Talk; All the 6s clickety-click...Big Joe, JC, Monty in Rio (or is he?) and High-tackle put up the half dozen to keep the Status quo. Fast Eddie (from darkest Africa) a steady 5 and Super Sue/Wily Bill Hayward carded 4s.

FOR THE second week in a row I have been spared the embarrassment...last week an unexpected family event stopped me from taking my seat at Mt Smart, this Saturday I was away from the telly in the Coromandel adding a deck to my bach. After a long day behind a builders apron decided 9.30pm was too late to go looking for a TV with an early start looming again in the morning. Followed the live blog on the Warriors website but disappointment and tiredness decided me to shut up shop at halftime. Some of our big names clearly bummed out. 70 plus points shipped in the last two starts is not business end footy and its looking like yet another unfulfilling season for whats left of the Faithful. I know mathematically we can make it but performing like untrained seals won't cut it anyway. I do note we had a couple of late defections and young standoff Ata Hingano got a run, a star in the making here but I guess both he and Lolohia will be looking sideways at the prospect of Foran possibly looming large in 2017. I find myself falling into the old habit of thinking it might be better next year with possibly Foran coming...like we did last year when TVSheck and Luke were coming and the year before Hoffman and Bodene...ahh you know what I mean.. Trying to remember the last time I was really happy and enthusiastic about the Warriors, jeez how does the Butcher do it staying staunch as concrete, upbeat and gung ho day in day out. I know what he would say...nobody died mate, the sun will still rise! Looking at the teams that are having a real go I still like Rickys Rugged Raiders. Their opposition the Eels were a bit slippery early but got dumped by the wave of green 28/18. The Roosters are long gone but watching them play you wouldn't know it. They put the Dragons season to bed emphatically 42/6 and the Bondi Boys aint finished yet. Likewise the Ripper Rabbitohs down and out but as forecast last week they are knocking over the big ones, outlasting the former front-running Sharks 12/6 and sending a further shiver thru the Shire. Another dark horse (make that Panther) is the Penrith crew gelling well at the right time and way too good for the teetering Tigers at 40/10 and everybodys talking about Cleary the new kid in town. The Broncos remain a threat as usual battering the bad tempered Bulldogs 20/10. Maybe Bennett still has an Ace or two to play. Dogged Dessy will lose big Sam K (for kicker) for a couple of outings. The Storm-troopers are looking set for the minor Premiership with a 3 point buffer over the stranded Sharks. Bellamy has quietly steered his charges to the top with a 250 point diff advantage saying plenty about their defence and attack. (our boys are minus 54! Go figure). The Titans won again and are the team attached to 8th spot. We need them to lose the last two while we win the last two, simple right..well I pick they will get beat by the Panthers and as well the Cowboys could cap them in rd 26, probably. The big question is can we find the where-with-all at home to bash the Tigers and the Eels, I hope Solomone is back on deck. Can we reach for the Stars? Time will tell.



**A Big Happy Birthday to our
Sydney Correspondent, Barry Ross, who
is turning 75 this Friday!**



**And a belated Happy Birthday to Rugby
League Bill Whitehead. 85 and still rocking.**

*Bill Whitehead QSM, Secretary-Manager, South Is Rugby
League Kiwis Association 11 Life Memberships,
10 RL one LVA Bowls*

Underdogs Show Their Hand for NSST

By Grant Chapman - NZRL Communications Manager



HOPING TO sneak into this year's NZRL National Secondary Schools Tournament unannounced, Avondale College may already have blown their cover, even before the event begins next Monday.

For sure, the West Aucklanders aren't exactly a known force in college rugby league. Last time they fielded a team in local competition was more than a decade ago, when former NZ Kiwis captain and current Vodafone Warriors development manager Duane Mann was the resident sports co-ordinator.

Their most famous league product is Kiwi #689 Francis Meli, back in the 1990s.

But if they wanted to slip under the radar at Papakura's Bruce Pulman Park next week, they probably wrecked their chances with a surprise showing in the Auckland CRL competition this season, progressing all the way to the top four.

Along the way, they accounted for defending NZ champions Otahuhu College and last year's third placegetters, Mt Albert Grammar.

"Our goal is to be the giant-killers of the competition," proclaims coach Ross Uele, who is also Akarana Falcons women's coach. "I keep telling the boys, if we do everything right, good things will come to the team."

Unfortunately, as top seeds in Pool D and thus projected as semi-finalists, Avondale look more like Goliath than David in this equation.

But, despite their high seeding, Avondale cannot expect to have things their own way, even in pool play. Lying in wait on Wednesday are Westlake Boys High School, who finished just below them in the Auckland standings and salvaged a draw from their last encounter.

"We want to come into the tournament and make a statement, but we're really focused on that third game against Westlake," says Uele.

They can't afford to take their opening opponents lightly either. Also lurking are Tamaki College, who were upstarts of the 2015 tournament, toppling champions Kelston Boys High on Day Two and eventually finishing fourth.

Add development-grade runners-up St Thomas of Canterbury and you can appreciate the obstacles confronting Avondale.

Uele's son, Caleb, is already destined for the North Queensland Cowboys next year and leads the Avondale roster, earning Prop of the Year honours at the CRL Awards this month and NZ 18s selection at last month's national trials.

Reader Mail

Good morning Sir Peter

THANK YOU so much for my jersey and the mags, love them! My parcel arrived last Friday. I was wanting to send an email earlier. But technology being a challenge for some, we wanted you to see the photo of me as well (attached).

Just between you and me I think Tom is a little jelly...but I will share with him J

Once again thank you so much.

Kind Regards, Hiria Woollen



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Papakura Through to Fox Grand Final

PAPAKURA HAVE secured a spot in the 2016 SAS Fox Memorial grand final, beating Pt Chevalier in the minor semi-finals last weekend.

Finishing the season as minor premiers, the Sea Eagles looked the most promising.

Early tries to second rower Samiu Ikahihifo, centre Andrew Tusiane and interchange prop King Vuniyayawa took them out to a 16-0 lead.

Slowly but surely Pt Chevalier found their feet in the contest though, after halfback Oliver Tuimavave scored and stand off Jonathan Carl converted to trail 18-6 at the break.

It was straight out the gates for Papakura in the second half with winger George Edwards breaking the line before kicking infield to hooker Terence Phillips extending their lead 24-6.

It wasn't over for the Pirates though with fullback Siua Otunuku storming over to score.

Another break off Otunuku, and second rower Daniel Bell narrowed the gap with a try.

Carl converted to add the extras, but it was too little too late for Pt Chevalier going down 26-14 at full time.

Earlier in the day, Mt Albert made easy work of Glenora eliminating the Bears 54-6.

Glenora were confident coming into the match having beaten the Sea Eagles the week prior, but Mt Albert proved too strong.

The Pirates will play traditional foes, the Mt Albert Lions in the major semi-final this week – a 2015 grand final rematch- to see who will advance to face the Papakura Sea Eagles in the September 3 grand final.

Catch all the action this Saturday at Mt Smart Stadium #2 with the Crown Lift Trucks Sharman Cup preliminary final between Waitemata and Bay Roskill at 11am before the major semi-final between Pt Chevalier and Mt Albert at 2.30pm.

The NZRL qualification game Auckland Vulcans 21's v Canterbury and the U20 grand final Otahuhu v Marist will also be played.

Entry for kids under 16 is just \$2 and adults \$8. Gates open at 10.30am.

Saturday August 27 Fixtures @ Mt Smart Stadium #2

11am | Crown Lift Trucks Sharman Cup preliminary final | Waitemata v Bay Roskill

12.45pm | NZRL qualification game | Auckland Vulcan's 21's v Canterbury

2.30pm | SAS Fox Memorial major semi-final | Pt Chevalier v Mt Albert

4.15pm | U/20 grand final | Otahuhu v Marist



NSW Cup Game Recap

By Joe Williams - NSW Cup Team Manager

THE INTRUST Super Premiership Vodafone Warriors returned home over the weekend after four straight weeks across the ditch. The homecoming wasn't ideal with the Warriors going down 38-30 to the minor premieres Mounties.

The contest between the Mounties was an entertaining game with a total of 12 tries scored throughout. The loss has resulted in the Vodafone Warriors slipping from fourth to fifth on the table with their final game of the season this weekend against Penrith Panthers.

The Warriors went into half time behind 20-12 after tries from Patrick Siple and Upu Poching and Mason Lino converting both. After halftime the Warriors were able to get on the board first through Jazz Tevaga however errors resulted in the Mounties getting one back.

In a tight tussle the Warriors scored two more tries from James Bell and Viliami Kaveinga however it wasn't enough to get them over the line. The Warriors finish the season this week at home hoping to play at home again next week depending on how the table finishes. The ISP Vodafone Warriors play at Mt Smart Stadium on Sunday as the first game of the triple header.

Reader Mail

AT THE time of writing, we are preparing for our Challenge Cup final with Warrington this coming Saturday 27th August at Wembley.

We as a club have won the Challenge Cup previously but never before at Wembley in the 120 years the competition has been in existence. During the 1980s we have lost to Wigan and our fierce rivals, Hull KR in the Challenge Cup final.

Even though we won the Challenge Cup in 2005 with Steve Kearney, Richard Swain and myself in the team it was played at the Millennium Stadium in Cardiff, Wales.

Saturday promises to be a great game as we are currently at the top of the Super League and Warrington are second so it is the seasons best 2 teams facing off.

Our Kiwi boys in Feka, Frank

(Pritchard), Carlos (Tuimavave), Sika (Manu) and Fetuli (Talanoa) have done a great job for the club this year alongside our Aussie boys, Mark Minichiello and Steve Michaels.

Warrington have recruited some NRL quality with Kurt Gidley, Chris Sandow and Ashton Sims in their ranks.

This season, we have played Warrington twice in the Super League and won both times but this will mean nothing come Saturday so hopefully our Kiwi boys will be able to do something the Kiwi legends before them, Leuluai, Kemble and O'hara were not able to do and that's win at Wembley !!!

From former Kiwi and Warrior Motu Tony, who is now the General Manager of Football at Hull FC

Hey Butch,

NICE TO catch up the other day. Just had to send you this photo of our twin boys.

Thank you so much for the one-sies! Loyal to the bitter end #keepingthefaith

Arohanui

Jenny-May & Dean Clarkson



A SCOTTISH SPECTACULAR DIRECT FROM EDINBURGH

**25 musicians, dancers and singers live on-stage
performing in full ceremonial uniform**

The world famous **PIPES & DRUMS OF THE ROYAL SCOTS DRAGOON GUARDS** today announce a seven-venue tour of New Zealand this November.

25 musicians in full ceremonial uniform under the direction of their commanding officer will perform their major recording hits including Amazing Grace, Highland Cathedral, The Last of the Mohicans, Going Home (as recorded with Mark Knopfler), Scotland The Brave, Blackbear Highland Laddie.

Starting in Auckland on November 17, followed by Tauranga, Napier, Palmerston North, Nelson, Christchurch and Dunedin, these stars of the 2016 Royal Edinburgh Military Tattoo will be supported by Regimental Dancers as well as special guests, New Zealand classical crossover artist Toni Gibson and musicians Chet O'Connell and Stuart Pearce.

The **PIPES & DRUMS OF THE ROYAL SCOTS DRAGOON GUARDS** promises to be a spectacular concert that will give audiences a whole new experience in classic pipe tunes along with some modern arrangements and a rare insight into the talent and stature of one of the greatest Scottish bands of all time.

Pre-sales have begun for these concerts. All remaining tickets will be released on Friday. Fans are urged to act without delay as tickets are strictly limited and the last time they performed New Zealand in 2004 -- just prior to performing active military service in Afghanistan -- their concerts sold out.

"Rousing the spirit and the heart.... a musical journey with Scotland's Senior Regiment!" Douglas Doherty – scotdisk.uk

In 1972 they hit No 1 in the charts for five weeks with Amazing Grace. Other great timeless hits followed with Highland Cathedral, Mull Of Kintyre, and the movie theme recorded with Mark Knopfler from Dire Straits, Going Home.

Remarkably all the members of **THE ROYAL SCOTS DRAGOON GUARDS** are fighting soldiers first and musicians second. Their world famous band is based at Edinburgh Castle, and is one of the oldest and most respected regiments in the British Army.

Noted for their thrilling moves (and sometimes antics) on stage, **THE ROYAL SCOTS DRAGOON GUARDS** are not often available for National Tours, so to have them in NZ for 7 shows in November is something of a "coup", says promoter Ian Magan.

AUCKLAND	TAURANGA	NAPIER	PALMERSTON NORTH
Thursday, 17 November	Saturday, 19 November	Sunday, 20 November	Tuesday, 22 November
Aotea Centre 7.30pm	Bays Stadium, 7.30pm	Municipal Theatre 7.30pm	Regent Theatre 7.30pm
Bookings: Ticketmaster	Bookings: Ticketek	Bookings: Ticketek	Bookings: TicketDirect
NELSON	CHRISTCHURCH	DUNEDIN	
Thursday, 24 November	Friday, 25 November	Saturday, 26 November	
Trafalgar Centre 7.30pm	Isaac Theatre Royal, 7.30pm	Town Hall	
Bookings: Ticketek	Bookings: Ticketek	Bookings: Ticketmaster	



BIG LEAGUE

THIS WEEK IN BIG LEAGUE'S HUGE ROUND 25 ISSUE...

Jam-packed with FEATURES and NEWS, plus columnist **BEN HUNT** 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

- The return of **Jarryd Hayne** to the NRL has been big, but what is he really worth to the Titans? We hit up their marketing manager to crunch the numbers on what Hayne brings back to the game and track increases to home and away crowds, merchandise sales, TV ratings and memberships.
- Ranting about referees is an age-old rugby league pastime so we spent some time with senior whistle-blower **Gerard Sutton** and boss **Tony Archer** to see how they handle the pressure. Referees make an average of 414 crucial decisions per game and the standard of no mistakes runs through the organisation.
- Softly-spoken powerhouse Warriors centre **Solomone Kata** has soared into contention for New Zealand in this year's Four Nations, but the Tongan has an important decision to make. "I'll check with my parents and see they think, and go from there," says the 20-year-old.
- Also, **Ben Hunt** says the Broncos' form slump was one of the toughest things he's been through; we attend a Men of League function remembering the great **Steve Rogers**; Bulldogs prop **Tim Browne** becomes the team's "anything man"; **Brenton Lawrence** talks us through all his amazing charity work and **Suliasi Vunivalu** rockets into Rookie of the Year contention.

PLUS... The Analyst compares the **Storm and Broncos second-rowers** and we remember the **Top 8 longest premierships droughts**.

AND: Little League, lower grade previews and a Corey Parker poster.



THIS WEEK'S ISSUE

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UPFRONT | FEATURE

FEW groups of players have done more to dispel the dreaded 'second-year syndrome' theory than the NRL's rookie class of 2015.

Last year's dux, Jack Bird, won NSW Origin selection, fullbacks Tom Trbojevic and Cameron Munster have emerged as two of the hottest prospects in the game and Reagan Campbell-Gillard, Tuimoala Lolohea, Euan Aitken, Waqa Blake, Nathan Ross, Albert Vete and Sam Lisone have all improved on their debut-season efforts.

But none of last year's standout rookies have enhanced their reputation more than explosive Warriors centre Solomone Kata has in his spectacular sophomore campaign.

The hat-trick hero and Jack Gibson Medal winner in the club's 2014 NYC grand final victory, Kata played every first-grade game last year and crossed for 12 tries, ending Manu Vatuvei's nine-season monopoly on the Warriors' top tryscorer mantle.

It's Kata's consistency and defensive improvement, however, that have seen him storm into contention for the Dally M Centre of the Year gong in 2016.

"That was my main focus for this year, in the off-season I put all my effort and focus on my defence," Kata tells *Big League*.

"I'm lucky I have (assistant coach) Justin Morgan here as well, he's helped me out a lot."

While Kata was far from a weak link during 2015, he was exposed by some of the premiership's more accomplished centres – most notably dynamic Rooster Blake Ferguson in a heavy Round 19 defeat – but Warriors coach Andrew McFadden believes fatigue was a factor in the novice's occasional lapses.

"He's always been a very good defender," McFadden contends.

"But he played all 24 games for us last year and just struggled a bit towards the end of the season, and got outclassed by the experience of certain individuals.

"He's learnt a lot and he's determined. I think that's been driving him all year, just to make sure he's consistent with his football."

Living proof of the old

adage that if the Warriors' defence is strong their trademark attacking brilliance takes care of itself, Kata boasts 14 tries in 20 appearances so far this season – including a memorable double against the Titans in Round 22 that featured the biggest fend of 2016 on Anthony Don while scoring a 90-metre intercept try.

A genuine flyer in open spaces, the nuggetty powerhouse is lethal close to the line from dummy-half and is the competition's top 10 for tackle-breaks.

Perhaps Kata's most remarkable 2016 stat, though, is that his opposing centres have only mustered six tries between them.

Lining up against the game's big-name three-quarters, including Ferguson, Jamie Lyon and former clubmate Konrad Hurrell, only seems to lift his performance – and the bigger the physical confrontation, the better.

"It's a good challenge for me to come up against those guys and I'm very happy to take them on," Kata says.

"That's the thing I most enjoy about league, the contact – and smashing people," he adds, almost sheepishly.

Kata deflected some of the rapturous praise coming his way onto his left-edge team-mates.

"It's really helped, having a few experienced players inside and outside me. Ryan Hoffman, Thomas Leuluai, and Manu [Vatuvei], they

make it easier for me to do my job."

McFadden, meanwhile, commended Kata's work ethic and desire to prove himself.

"I don't think he fears any centre, he's very confident in his own ability," the coach says.

"He puts a lot of time into his game. The way he's playing is a reflection of how hard he works off the field."

Kata's monumental rise is even more remarkable when you consider his background.

Born in Neiafu on the island of Vava'u in northern Tonga, Kata had no knowledge of any oval-ball sports as a youngster.

Moving to Tongatapu, the main island of Tonga, he proved a natural at the 15-a-side game, winning selection for the national under-18s side and receiving a scholarship with famed Auckland rugby nursery Sacred Heart College.

"It was pretty hard to be away from my parents, but after one year I realised why I was here," the softly-spoken Kata says.

The Warriors recognised his potential, enticing the blockbusting teenager to switch codes and drafting him into their NYC squad in 2013.

Despite more than five years in Auckland, a big piece of Kata remains in Tonga. He installed SKY TV at his family's home so they can track his meteoric rise.

"I went back on our bye week and I'll go after the season or at Christmas. I pretty much call my family every week and check how they are.

"Sometimes I feel a bit homesick, but it's not too bad."

Kata has represented Mate Ma'a Tonga with distinction, demonstrating his passion for his homeland by starring in electrifying showdowns with Samoa during the 2015 and 2016 rep weekends.

With the Kiwis battling back-line injury problems, however, he shapes a front-line contender for Stephen Kearney's Four Nations squad – though Kata remains laidback about an impending international allegiance decision, with his family's input set to play an important part.

"I'll check with my parents, see what they think, and go from there."

PHOTO: Shane Wenzlick/NRLPhotos.com

Seasoned sophomore

Nobody has shaken the idea of 'second-year syndrome' off better than Warriors centre Solomone Kata. By **WILL EVANS**



DATE: SUNDAY, AUGUST 28
VENUE: MT SMART STADIUM
KICK-OFF: 4PM (NZ)
REFEREE: GERARD SUTTON
ASSISTANT REFEREE: ALAN SHORTALL
TOUCH JUDGES: JEFF YOUNIS & SHANE REHM
SENIOR REVIEW OFFICIAL: ASHLEY KLEIN
REVIEW OFFICIALS: STEVE CHIDDY & LUKE PATTEN
FOX SPORTS: LIVE 2PM (AEST)
LIVE RADIO: 2GB, ABC

#NRLWarriorsTigers				P	T	G	PTS			
16	11	0	44	David FUSITU'A	1	David NOFOALUMA	21	14	21	56
20	4	5	26	Tuimoala LOLOHEA	2	Jordan RANKIN	20	7	21	70
22	8	0	32	Blake AYSHFORD	3	Tim SIMONA	19	7	1	30
20	14	0	56	Solomone KATA	4	Kevin NAIQAMA	21	10	0	40
13	5	0	20	Manu VATUVEI	5	Joshua ADDO-CARR	7	5	0	20
16	3	0	12	Thomas LEULUAI	6	Mitchell MOSES	21	5	43*	109
22	10	42*	125	Shaun JOHNSON	7	Luke BROOKS	19	5	0	20
20	1	0	4	Jacob LILLYMAN	8	Aaron WOODS (C)	17	0	0	0
10	0	0	0	Nathaniel ROACHE	9	Dene HALATAU	21	0	0	0
13	2	0	8	Albert VETE	10	Sauaso SUE	19	2	0	8
16	5	0	20	Bodene THOMPSON	11	Josh ALOIAI	22	1	0	4
21	2	0	8	Ryan HOFFMAN (C)	12	Chris LAWRENCE	21	3	0	12
20	2	0	8	Simon MANNERING	13	Elijah TAYLOR†	15	1	0	4

INTERCHANGE

1	0	0	0	Ata HINGANO	14	Kyle LOVETT	22	1	0	4
19	0	0	0	Sam LISONE	15	Ava SEUMANUFAGAI	22	1	0	4
21	1	0	4	Ben MATULINO	16	Tim GRANT	20	0	0	0
9	0	0	0	James GAVET	17	Joel EDWARDS	6	0	0	0

18 Bunty AFOA

18 Michael CHEE KAM

*Field Goals: S Johnson 1

*Field Goals: M Moses 3

†Played 2 games for Penrith

COACHES

Andrew McFADDEN

Jason TAYLOR

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

	WARRIORS	TIGERS
Position (Points)	9th (24)	10th (24)
Points For	451	453
Points Against	509	531

ATTACK		
Tries	83	80
Completions	75%	78%
Tries 0-20m	59	45
Tries 21-50m	15	22
Tries 51-100m	9	13

DEFENCE		
Tries	88	92
Tries 0-20m	55	60
Tries 21-50m	21	21
Tries 51-100m	12	11

MATCH AVERAGES		
Tries Scored	4	4
Tries Conceded	4	4
Points Scored	21	21
Points Conceded	23	24
Hit Ups/Runs	172	162
Tackles	310	323
Metres Gained	1508	1471
Handling Errors	5	4
Offloads	9	8
Line-breaks	5	4
Goalkicking	73%	63%

HEAD-TO-HEAD
 Played 26, Warriors 13, Wests Tigers 13

AT MT SMART STADIUM
 Played 10, Warriors 6, Wests Tigers 4

WINNING FORM 2016
WARRIORS: LLLWWLWLLBWWLWBLWLLWLL Streak - 2 losses
TIGERS: WWLLLLLWLLWBLWLBWWLL Streak - 2 losses

PAST 8 CLASHES
2016 - WESTS TIGERS D. WARRIORS 34-26 at Campbelltown Stadium.
2015 - WESTS TIGERS D. WARRIORS 50-16 at Campbelltown Stadium;
WARRIORS D. WESTS TIGERS 32-22 at Mt Smart Stadium. **2014 - WARRIORS D. WESTS TIGERS 42-18** at Westpac Stadium, Wellington.
2013 - WARRIORS D. WESTS TIGERS 24-14 at Leichhardt Oval.
2012 - WESTS TIGERS D. WARRIORS 24-22 at Leichhardt Oval. **2011 - WARRIORS D. WESTS TIGERS 22-20** at Sydney Football Stadium;
WESTS TIGERS D. WARRIORS 26-22 at Mt Smart Stadium.

BIGGEST HEAD-TO-HEAD WINS
WARRIORS D. WESTS TIGERS 42-18 at Westpac Stadium, Wellington, 2014. **WESTS TIGERS D. WARRIORS 50-4** at Jade Stadium, Christchurch, 2004.

NEXT CLASH
WARRIORS v Parramatta at Mt Smart, 4pm Sunday, September 4
WESTS TIGERS v Canberra at Leichhardt, 2pm Sunday, September 4

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

NRL Preview

by DAVID MIDDLETON
@Middleton_David

Warriors, Wests Tigers need luck to advance

Mt Smart Stadium Sunday 4pm

Form: The Warriors were looking good to break their lengthy finals drought a fortnight ago after back-to-back wins against Penrith and the Titans, but since then they've gone down to revitalised outfits Souths and the Cowboys. Now their finals hopes rest on the brink. Wests Tigers have also fallen into a hole over the past fortnight, dropping consecutive games and losing their number one player James Tedesco in the process.

History: These teams have clashed 26 times since Wests

Tigers entered the NRL in 2000 and the record stands at 13 wins apiece. The Wests Tigers squared the ledger with successive victories at Campbelltown (2015-16), however the Warriors have won a majority of the contests at Mt Smart Stadium.

Danger sign: The Warriors faded from the finals equation last season after losing playmaker Shaun Johnson. Now he stands as the key to his team making a late charge. The Warriors play their final two games at home and although their fate is reliant on other results all they can do is ensure they are in a position to capitalise.

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

Money-spinner: Candidates for First Tryscorer include David Fusitu'a, Solomone Kata and Tuimoala Lolohea.

CASUALTY WARD

WARRIORS: Ken Maumalo (hamstring) – indefinite; Issac Luke (knee) – Rd 26; Charlie Gubb (susp.) – Finals Wk 1; Roger Tuivasa-Sheck (ACL)/ Sione Lousi (ACL) – season.

WESTS TIGERS: James Tedesco (jaw) – Finals Wk 1-2; Nathan Milone (knee)/Matt Ballin (knee) – season.



HOLDEN CUP

DATE: SUNDAY, AUGUST 28 **VENUE:** MT SMART STADIUM **KICK-OFF:** 11.45AM (NZ)
REFEREE: ZIGGY PRZEKLASA-ADAMSKI **ASSISTANT REFEREE:** DREW OULTRAM
TOUCH JUDGES: ANTHONY ELLIOT & CHRIS McMILLAN

WARRIORS V WESTS TIGERS

Kane TELEA	1	Daniel ROBERTS
Lewis SOOSEMEEA	2	Roman IOELU
Melino FINEANGANOFU	3	Toa MATA'AFU
Junior PAUGA	4	Esan MARSTERS
Matt FAITOTOA	5	Obed KARWHIN
Dylan TAVITA	6	Veiru MAPESONE
Chanel HARRIS-TAVITA	7	Thomas BARTLEY
Kenese KENESE	8	Ray STONE
Sheldon PITAMA (C)	9	Jacob LIDDLE
Mattais HEIMULI	10	Taniela PASEKA
Ofhiki OGDEN	11	Jakob GILES
Marata NIUKORE	12	Mark McCORMACK
Chris SIO	13	Jack WHEELHOUSE (C)
14 Jerome MAMEA	14	Daniel PECK
15 Joseph VUNA	15	Lenny SAUNI, 16 Trent PYE
16 Preston RIKI	16	Rhys SCIGLITANO
17 Elijah SUFIA	17	Pio SOKOBALAVA
Kelvin WRIGHT		Willie PETERS



ELIJAH TAYLOR

60
tackles in
Round 24

HEAD-TO-HEAD LEADERS

AVERAGE METRES	AVERAGE TACKLES	LINE-BREAKS
Roger Tuivasa-Sheck 176	Simon Mannering 48	David Nofoaluma 16
Aaron Woods 161	Elijah Taylor 44	James Tedesco 15
James Tedesco 136	Bodene Thompson 40	Tuimoala Lolohea 14
David Fusitu'a 135	Robbie Farah 34	Shaun Johnson 14
David Nofoaluma 134	Issac Luke 30	David Fusitu'a 14

NRL FANTASY

FANTASY POINTS
Bodene Thompson 57.2
Simon Mannering 56.8
Shaun Johnson 53.5
James Tedesco 51.0
Issac Luke 48.1

Warriors – LAST RESULT

Lost 34-6 v North Queensland

Tryscorer: Ryan Hoffman.

Team: David Fusitu'a, Ken Maumalo, Blake Ayshford, Matthew Allwood, Manu Vatuvei, Thomas Leuluai, Shaun Johnson, Jacob Lillyman, Nathaniel Roache, Albert Vete, Bodene Thompson, Ryan Hoffman, Simon Mannering. **Interchange:** Sam Lisone, Ben Matulino, James Gavet, Ata Hingano.

Wests Tigers – LAST RESULT

Lost 40-10 v Penrith

Tryscorers: Josh Addo-Carr, Mitchell Moses.

Team: Jordan Rankin, David Nofoaluma, Tim Simona, Kevin Naiqama, Josh Addo-Carr, Mitchell Moses, Luke Brooks, Aaron Woods, Dene Halatau, Sauaso Sue, Josh Aloia, Chris Lawrence, Elijah Taylor. **Interchange:** Kyle Lovett, Ava Seumanufagai, Tim Grant, Joel Edwards.

A WEEK TO FORGET...

The Warriors' season is finishing poorly after they were handed a brutal 34-0 defeat by the Cowboys – their third loss in a row. Junior Pauga was a standout in the loss with 11 tackle-breaks and 165 metres. Fullback Kane Telea also made 119 metres in a forgettable game for the away side. With 18 errors and 10 penalties conceded, correcting their ill-discipline will be key to improvement against a confident team like the Wests Tigers, who will punish them with ease if they repeat their 52 missed tackles.



TAKING DOWN GIANTS...

Wests Tigers celebrated a 22-14 away victory over competition front-runners Penrith. The Wests Tigers were relentless and a win means they have secured a place in the finals. Despite only leading by two points at the break, Tony Tali bagged his second try in the second half, while Esan Marsters (pictured) scored the last try to seal the win. Prop Ray Stone was also immense, making 154 metres and 37 tackles. A win against the Warriors will help the Tigers keep the pressure on the top four.

– SAM PASFIELD

PHOTOS: NRL Photos.com; Mark Nolan (Taylor), Charles Knight (Marsters)



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Kata and Lolohea return to face Tigers

by Richard Becht

SOLOMONE KATA and Tuimoala Lolohea both return for the Vodafone Warriors' 25th-round NRL contest against Wests Tigers at Mount Smart Stadium on Sunday (4pm kick-off).

A hamstring injury kept the 21-year-old Kata out of Saturday's clash against the North Queensland Cowboys while Lolohea turned out for the club's Intrust Super Premiership side against the Mounties in Auckland.

Kata was missing from the line-up for only the second time in 46 matches since his NRL debut last year and the first time through injury.

The club's top try scorer with 14, he ranks sixth equal among all NRL players so far this season and is averaging 116 metres a game.

Lolohea returns for his 47th first-grade game replacing right wing Ken Maumalo, who was forced off the field with a hamstring injury after just 17 minutes of the North Queensland encounter.

The rest of the line-up named today is unchanged from the one used in Townsville with Ata Hingano on a five-man bench after becoming Vodafone Warrior #214 on Saturday.

VODAFONE WARRIORS v WESTS TIGERS

VODAFONE WARRIORS

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

Interchange

- 14 Ata HINGANO
- 15 Sam LISONE
- 16 Ben MATULINO
- 17 James GAVET
- 18 Bunty AFOA

This Sunday 28 August

Gates: 11:30 am

ISP KO: 11:45 am

NYC KO: 1:45 pm

NRL KO: 4:05 pm





Stacey Jones Lounge Menu

Warriors vs Tigers

28th August, 2016

Menu:

Garlic & Rosemary Roasted Lamb

W/ Mint Sauce & Gravy

Medley Of Root Vegetables

Steamed Peas & Carrots

Garden Salad W/ French Dressing

Bread Rolls & NZ Butter

\$25 pp

Lounge members to book your
meal contact:

Angela.Charman@epicure-nz.com

or

+64 9 571 1666

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stephan.maier@medstar.co.nz

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