

VODAFONE



Sir Peter Leitch Club

AT MT SMART STADIUM, HOME OF THE MIGHTY VODAFONE WARRIORS

7th September 2016

Newsletter #138



**We Salute the Loyal
Vodafone Warriors Fans**



Photos courtesy of www.photosport.nz





NO POINT going over all the old ground. It least it's over, and sadly that feels like a bit of a blessing. To say I was in a foul mood by the time I got very late to Mt Smart, having been stuck on the motorway in the pissing rain, is something of an understatement.

Twelve points up - and I didn't even get to see it, but all downhill from there.

Strangely, and I am pretty sure this is not a good thing, I was not upset by our final failure, letting in 40 points to those cheating bastards the Eels.

I just had no expectation, and that is probably about as sad a thing as you can say about the club you support.

I'll be back next year though. It's my team and what else am I going to do - start following some Aussie side - not going to happen.

Yes it was a year of disappointments, but my biggest - although the showing we put in at New Plymouth against the Raiders would run it close - was having to watch Simon Mannering trudge off the park a beaten man way too often.

Having given up the captaincy, there was endless debate about did he fall or was he pushed, but Simon, superb club man that he is, stuck to the line that he needed to have the pressure taken off so he could concentrate on his own game.

And did we benefit? Hell yes.

He was our best - though it's only my opinion certainly, which of course does mean it's right.

As far as I can tell he has the same game-plan every week, tackle that bloke, then that one, then that one.

What really galls is that I read David Long's excellent piece with Simon at the weekend, and agreed with everything the man who will overtake Stacey Jones' all time appearances record next season, had to say.

For those who did not see it, Mannering was gutted. "There is nothing worse than proving people right."

The next sentence he uttered tells you everything about him. "I represent this club with pride, and love being here, and that will never change, but I'd love for the perception to be different. We try so hard for it to be, but it hasn't changed in a fair while."

When all the blame game, finger-pointing and coach abusing is done, Mannering will emerge unscathed.

If it is all about attitude, as so many argue, then how do we transfer Mannering's attitude to others?

"You don't want to take it for granted that you're playing in the NRL and for the Warriors, and there's no such thing as not an important game. Every time you put the jersey on, you do it with pride."

Can we say we have always had players out there who have done that?

But you know the saddest sentence of all in the entire article?

"I'm running out of years to change it."

Mannering - captain or not - deserved a lot better.

More on the on next page..

I Can't Remember When...

I can't remember when we last won our final game of the season - or the first one come to that.

Actually that is a lie, I can remember exactly when we won our final game of the year.

It was 2011.

Say no more...

Same Songs, Different Day

McFadden criticised his players for making too many errors. "There were just too many, it's as simple as that. That put us under heaps of pressure."

And captain Ryan Hoffman said the game summed up the 2016 campaign. "It was a great example of our season. We showed we can do great things, then allowed teams back into it.

We work hard for our points and let in soft ones."

Quote Of The Week

Poor Shaun Johnson has copped more stick than anyone – though God alone knows why we expect him to be perfect – but I am awarding him the David Kemeys Medal for 2016.

It is kind of like the Dally M, but more important, since it is given not for league prowess, but for the best quote of the year.

And here it is, after the Eels: "I'm over it, it feels frustrating, it feels like crap."

Yep, pretty much says it all doesn't it?

Poor Showing Heaps Pressure On McFadden

And while I am on the subject of Johnson, he admitted the players have left Andrew McFadden in a tough spot.

We are told his job pretty-much depends on our end of season review. It was not great before Sunday, and the limp loss to the Eels can't have done his chances much good.

McFadden talked to the players in the sheds after the match, and Johnson spilled the beans.

"He thanked the players who have served the club, and who are leaving. But there's not much you can say, we let him, and ourselves, down again."

So That Does Mean We Have Improved?

Searching for positives can get a bit tiring, but with our season over, it's worth one last try. Last season we lost our eight final games, this season we only lost our final four. Twice as good as the previous year, so don't try and tell me we aren't improving.

Might Have Left It A Bit Late Boys

How depressing was it to read that our coaching people having been putting a lot of effort into one specific area? Know what it was?

Errors.

McFadden said for a month everyone had been telling the players the errors needed to stop.

That worked then didn't it?

"We're out there holding each other accountable," McFadden said. "You can't not pull someone up for some of the stuff we do."

According to Johnson: "We gave up soft tries and didn't learn from it."

The "It's Only A Game" Player Rankings

It is traditional to review, and even sometimes grade, player performances.

Since I freely admit to knowing next to nothing about the game, it would be foolish of me to do so, but equally, since being foolish is also something I freely admit to, I will.

I think this is every player who got an outing, but since any old soul can give you a mark out of 10, or an A or B, I thought I'd do it by matching the player to the game they would be if they were indeed a game.

RTS – Operation: Could only have been more unlucky if he had got injured even earlier.

Tui Lolohea – Jigsaw: There's always a piece missing.

David Fusitua – Chinese Checkers: You go here, then there, then in the corner.

Manu Vatuvei – Sorry: Lots of go forward but always apologising.

Ken Maumalo – Draughts: Jumped over a few others to get ahead.

Jonathan Wright – Hamster Hammer: Bash it and it just keeps popping up.

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Matt Allwood – Chess: Everyone knows how to play, no one wants to.

Blake Ayshford – Knock, Knock: Who's there? Oh, come on through.

Konrad Hurrell – Monopoly: Go directly to Jail, do not pass Go...

Solomone Kata – Bullrush: Straight ahead is fine by me.

Jeff Robson – Blind Man's Buff: Flapping around in the dark.

Thomas Leuluai – Apocalypse Now: Because it's a disaster he's gone.

Shaun Johnson – Hide and Seek: No matter how hard you looked, you couldn't find him.

Ata Hingano – Candy Crush: Sweet, kind of new and exciting.

Issac Luke – Scrabble: Just never sure what you were going to get.

Jazz Tevaga – Patience: Needed it, because in and out all the time.

Nathaniel Roache – Minecraft: Building for a better future and all that.

Jacob Lillyman – Kung Fu Panda: Big but not all that scary.

Ben Matulino – Battleship: As in, you sunk it.

Albert Vete – Blackjack: 21 and promises big rewards.

James Gavet – Go Fish: Have you got any ...props? Yes. Lots of props.

Sione Lousi – Slot cars: Fast, exciting, but almost always broken.

Toa Siple – 500: One of the few who came up trumps.

Charlie Gubb – Pokemon Go: Don't understand what all the fuss is about.

Raymond Faitala-Mariner – Swap it: Wish we hadn't.

Shaun Lane – Cluedo: That can't be right, more hasn't got a clue. D'oh!

Ligi Sao –Life: Anyone want to play? No.

Sam Lisone – Trivial Pursuit: More questions than answers.

Bodene Thompson – Donkey Kong: Easy to learn, impossible to master.

Ryan Hoffman – Pac-Man: In the end you always blow up.

Bunty Afoa – Cranium: Next to some of them, looked like a genius.

John Palavi – Pool: Always stranded behind the 8-ball.

Simon Mannerling – Rugby league: Has everything our great game requires.

Ben Henry – Guess Who? Injured in game one and already fading from memories. He's been a fantastic servant and a man who deserved better luck than he got. His career ends on the back of a cruel injury that means we will never get to see what he might have achieved.

Can I Have A Deal Like That Please?

"I am a Tiger for life," Robbie Farah said. Well, until tomorrow, when he joins Souths.

According to reports out of Oz, he will have \$778,000 of his salary paid by the Tigers.

No wonder the bloke retains affection for the Balmain mob.

I demanded Sir Peter give me a deal like it to contribute to the newsletter. His reply only had two words, and one of them was "off".

With what Farah will also get from the Rabbitohs, he will be among the highest paid players in the league.

When you fall out with the coach – even one as poor as Jason Taylor – there is only going to be one winner.

So Robbie might have got a rousing farewell from the fans, who have always loved the NSW State of Origin hooker, but it will have been a bigger cheer than the Tigers got, smacked 52-10 by the Raiders when a win would have got them to the eight.

This is how much sympathy I have for the Tigers.

None.

More on the on next page..

Best Of Luck Mac

It will not be the same listening to the Vodafone Warriors games on Radio Sport with long-time commentator Allen McLaughlin having called his last.

The man they call Allen Mac has been calling league for 30 years or more, and he's been the voice for our games since the club's first outing against Brisbane back in 1995.

We know very few NRL players ever hit the 300 mark, but Mac has – 305 games called in total.

He only ever missed one game – when he was a bit crook- so finished with an impressive 254 home games.

His partnership with former Kiwi Owen Wright is well-known to any league fan.

Mac's love of league goes way back to going to Carlaw Park with his father, and started in radio way back in 1975, and since then he has called everything from league to softball and even the ponies.

He's travelled the world covering the Kiwis, and even worked alongside some Kiwis greats including Des White and Kevin Tamati.

And of course he always made time to come and talk to us in the lounge, so from all of us to you Allen Mac, good luck and thanks for the memories.

All the Action from The Stacey Jones Lounge



Another Selley's BBQ packs goes to Lee Whitehead



Hiria Woollen receives the prized Selley's BBQ pack



Paul McNiff from Ireland wins a Selley's BBQ pack, he was so pleased he sung an Irish song, it was fabulous.



Ruth gets one of those famous Selley's BBQ packs

More Action in the Stacey Jones Lounge



A very brave Victor Ah Yuk explains why he came into the Sir Peter Leitch Club in Eels colours.



Ben Henry, Charlie Gubb and Sione Lousi.



Butch talks with Paul Donkins once part of the first Warriors management team..



Fleur Finlayson and Shigemi Haddow.



Joseph Mapusa talks to Butch about his favourite player.



Kalib Farr, Luke Dougherty and Cameron Norton all recieved popcorn.



Legend Andrew Johns (who played 249 games for the Knights, 23 for NSW and 24 for Australia) joined us in the lounge.



Mason Lino and James Bell.



Michael from Papakura Sea Eagles who beat Pt Chevalier Pirates in the Auckland Rugby League Grand Final.



Nick Repoama, Isaiah Galuvao and Makehi Galuvao with Sir Peter.



Owen and Campbell from Auckland Central Police Station.



Ray Dougherty and the Butcher.

Even More Action in the Stacey Jones Lounge



Shaun Shait from Wellington.



Shuan Shait with his Jersey.



Sione Lousi talks to Sir Peter about leaving the club..



Solemona Kata with Sir Peter.



Butch with Mason Lino and Semisi Tyrell.



Shigemi Haddow with the Butcher.



Our good friend Andrew Cornaga of Photosport graced us with his presence in the lounge.



Photographer Andrew Cornaga with son Emily (8yrs) and Harry (13) and the Butch.



Emily Cornaga receives popcorn from Butch.



Andrew with Allen Mac.



A young fan receives a box set of the League Libraries



Glenn, from Sentra Printing, and his family had a great time in the lounge. His children Maya and Ashton pictured with Charlie and Sol.



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)

Allen Mac was Our Eyes and Ears

*Radio Sport's Allen McLaughlin during his last commentary game at Mt Smart.
Photo www.photosport.nz*

MY FIRST sports editor, away back in 1963 when I turned up at The Press in Christchurch as an uncouth youth from Greymouth, impressed on me the importance of accuracy in my writing and keeping of statistics. Newspapers, he said, were the eyes and ears of the nation. These were the days before live television and when sport on radio was still in its infancy. Dick Brittenden's advice given 53 years ago came to mind when I learned of Allen McLaughlin's retirement.

Allen Mac is essentially the last media person to have been those "eyes and ears" of rugby league followers when they could not personally watch the Warriors or Kiwis live or on television. Newspapers are now wilting at a great rate but changed tack long ago. Instead of a reporter at the ground giving readers an analysis of the match, he is instead expected to ask captains and coaches for their (obviously biased) opinions. There is much more emphasis on off-field stories. Scribes no longer need to fully understand the game.

Years ago former Kiwis hooker Wayne Wallace coached Hornby to another Canterbury grand final victory. Knowing he was not one for ceremony, I went down to Hornby's team room to find Waldo – cigarette in one hand, beer in the other – while the medals were being presented upstairs. "What did you think of all that?" I asked him. "Why are you asking me?" he grinned. "Why not write it as you saw it? You've been coming here even bloody longer than I have!" But it was his words that the paper wanted. My job was to delete the expletives.

Not so with radio. Allen McLaughlin was our "eyes and ears" from the time he first picked up a microphone 41 years ago until he put it down at fulltime in the Warriors' match against the Parramatta Eels last Sunday. Remarkably, he has missed only one of the Warriors' 255 home matches and has called a total of 305 when other venues are taken into account. To that triple century can be added numerous Tests and tour games -- from Carlaw Park to Suncorp Stadium to Central Park in Wigan. Of them, only Suncorp and Allen are still standing.

When Allen looks back he should do so with the knowledge and pride that his has been a working life well lived. I'm sure there have been times of great frustration. I know from personal experience that media bosses are not always generous in their rugby league budget allocations. There were Tests and tours he should have seen and called, only for those taking care of the bottom line deciding instead to use cheaper but far less knowledgeable options.

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To be honest, I am much more familiar with Allen as an outstanding cricket commentator simply because I could usually watch the Warriors and Kiwis live or on television. But often I have turned from the television at fulltime and grabbed a radio to listen to Allen and Owen Wright summarise a game. My viewing had been limited to a rectangular screen, so they were still acting as my “eyes and ears” to get an overall picture and their opinions were highly valued.

My rugby league radio listening extends back to the early 1960s, when Gordan Dryden and Ray Cody accompanied Kiwis teams to Britain and France. Radio New Zealand’s Murray King was the only other media man with me on the 1971 Grand Slam tour. Then there was Des White, who had already graced Carlaw Park as one of our finest fullbacks and goal kickers before skilfully calling a later generation of players from the rickety radio box on the roof of the old Railway Stand. By the early 1980s Allen Mac was Des White’s apprentice.

Allen went to Britain and France with the 1985 Kiwis. In those days the small New Zealand media contingent travelled and stayed with the players. Having led a supporters’ party in 1985, I know the planes, buses and hotels were not as ancient as those of 1971, but I am glad Allen had the chance to experience the camaraderie of a real old style tour. Allen is an old style leaguie. His father first took him to Carlaw Park way back, just as mine had taken me to Wingham Park in Greymouth. Those fields were equally muddy on a wet day but the atmosphere at both was intoxicating and it was easy to develop an attraction for the game.

Owen Wright has been Allen’s comments man for 251 Warriors games. Before that Owen was an intelligent and effective Kiwis second-row forward in 16 Tests and on three tours. Owen was an Auckland coach during the early 1990s, one of several whose provincial record suffered because Frank Endacott had charge of arguably Canterbury’s best team of all time. But, no matter how disappointed, Owen was always polite and perceptive in his after-match comments in Christchurch -- and he never let Frank’s mob win on his beloved Carlaw Park.



*Jim Doyle, Allen Mac
and Butch*

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

Linwood Wins In Canterbury

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)



THE LINWOOD Keas have the Pat Smith Challenge Trophy back in their possession for the first time since 2008 after decisively accounting for Hornby Panthers 29-10 in the Canterbury club grand final at AMI Stadium on Sunday. It took the Keas only 25 minutes to put the result beyond doubt as they capitalised on a strong wind advantage to race in for five tries and a 28-0 lead.

Once again, the old adage of “you have to lose one to win one” proved to be true, Linwood having suffered a heart-wrenching loss to Papanui Tigers during extra time in the 2015 grand final. This time there was never any thought of extra time, just as there was never much prospect of the Panthers threatening to overtake Linwood once they had their turn with the fierce southerly wind.

Linwood half Toimoana Sepuloni established the first-half pattern when he kicked to the in-goal (a particularly large one because of its rugby union markings) and forced a drop-out from the opening set. The Hornby defence was slow to find its feet and Keas wing William Yeow crossed wide out to open the scoring. That set up a sequence which lasted until Linwood was too far out of range to be caught.

Not all of the tries resulted from sublime attacking manoeuvres. In fact, anything seemed to do so long as Linwood used the wind to get within range of Hornby's try-line. Once there, strong, straight running was usually enough to penetrate the shaky Panthers defensive line. But one try resulted from a lucky miskicked grubber which had the Hornby cover scuttling in the wrong direction.

To its credit, Hornby eventually stopped the bleeding and then replied with two well-spaced tries. After it finally managed to force a repeat set, left wing Tauvale Tauvale touched down for the try which, with James Baxendale's sideline conversion, completed a 28-6 halftime scoreline. But for the Panthers to seriously get back into the contest they needed plenty of points in the third quarter.

That did not happen. In fact, Linwood battled away and kicked into the wind so well that it forced two drop-outs, and when Hornby had the ball it was guilty of making too many basic errors. At no stage was Hornby able to apply any pressure to a bulky Linwood forward pack which might have wilted

against a better organised opposition. Only Baxendale, arguably the best player on the field, was any real threat.

It was not until the 68th minute, through right wing Sonny Karena off a short pass from captain Corey Lawrie, that Hornby again got across the Linwood try-line and that was far too late. As if to emphasise Linwood's superiority, stand-off Daniel Hartley chipped over a short-range field goal five minutes from fulltime. It was Linwood's first point for 50 minutes, but they already had more than enough.

The result spoiled former Warriors forward Lawrie's previously perfect record of five grand final wins from as many appearances since 2006. Loose forward Baxendale and centre Craig Smith had shared in those five victories but were also survivors of a record 66-10 hammering from Linwood in 2005. They must have had visions of that nightmarish scoreline being repeated on Sunday. If it is any consolation, the battered 2005 Hornby team regrouped and beat Linwood in the 2006 grand final.

Linwood captain Agaese Fiso was one of four Keas, along with Chris Bamford, Siona Tuiloma and Phil Wahngig, who played in their last championship success, at the expense of Papanui eight years ago. No doubt they had the chance on Sunday night to reflect it had been a long time between drinks. Current coach Andrew Auimatagi also earned a winner's medal in 2008. The Keas dedicated their win to Teni Tuli, who tragically died during a 2015 training run in the week leading up to his 300th game.

The Man of the Match award, named after former Hornby, Canterbury and Kiwis legend Mel Cooke, went to Linwood centre Erwin Sauni. It was truly a special occasion for the Sauni family, for Erwin had brothers Matthew and Paul alongside him in the Linwood line-up. Veteran rugby league watchers (i.e. Frank Endacott and me) could not recall three brothers previously sharing a grand final triumph.

Scorers: Linwood Keas 29 (William Yeow, Daniel Hartley, Matthew Sauni, Toimoana Sepuloni, Michael Nicholls-Cane tries; Hartley four goals and a field goal) beat Hornby 10 (Tauvale Tauvale, Sonny Karena tries; James Baxendale goal). Halftime: Linwood 28-6. Winning coach: Andrew Auimatagi. Referees: Adam Burns and Steve Toms.



By John Deaker

Signing More Australians isn't the Answer. Signing Kieran Foran Is

Manly's Kieran Foran during the NRL Rugby League match against the Vodafone Warriors. 25.06.15 Photo www.photosport.nz

IT'S A tough week for the Warriors' players and management; a season that again promised so much delivered so little. It's also made tougher because it's a time when critics like to put the boot in to the club and throw around wild criticisms and observations from the sideline that often lack any substance.

One of the most annoying criticisms leveled at the team is sometimes the call for them to sign up more Australian players. Personally, I've been a fan of the club from day 1 (I'd been a Bulldogs fan before that due to their club's strong Kiwi connection) because I want to support a team with mainly New Zealand players. Of course watching a winning team would be great, but the Warriors' role developing New Zealand rugby league players is an even higher priority for me.

To select mainly Australians in their squad would indicate the Warriors were giving up on the 'Development Club' philosophy that it's often prided itself on in the past. It'd also be unrealistic because trying to attract quality Australian players has always been a difficult task and almost always requires paying the individuals considerably more than what Australian clubs are prepared to offer.

Signing Kieran Foran would be massive for the Warriors and could go some way to solving a lot of their existing problems. They must go all out to sign him, even if it means cutting some very good players from their current roster. Here's half a dozen key reasons:

- 1) It's a win/win situation: He's a Kiwi who needs help and he's got the skill-set to lend a huge hand to the Warriors.
- 2) He's a winner: He's won an NRL Premiership with Manly and his on-field leadership and intellectual property he'd bring with him to the club would be invaluable.
- 3) Shaun Johnson's need for structure and stability around him: Johnson is a bit like a young Benji Marshall. He's potentially a match-winner, but he's not capable yet of being a consistent, reliable playmaker to guide your team round the park. Benji was brilliant when he had a man like Scott Prince next to him in the halves at the Tigers. Johnson was most effective for the Warriors when someone like James Maloney was doing the talking and providing the dominant leadership in the halves. Foran and Johnson's combination could make them both better players and the flow-on-effect on the team's performances would be significant.
- 4) Foran's tough: For all his weaknesses that have been exposed OFF the field, Foran is as tough as they come on it – mentally and physically. Not many current Warriors players get accused of possessing this trait.

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5) Halves win titles: When you look back over time there's very few Premiership winners that haven't had class right through their spine - and particularly in the halves.

6) Something significant must change: It would be a big call to stick with the same coaching staff in 2017 but it may prove to be the club's best option available. However, an even bigger call by the club would be to stick with the same coaches AND the same core group of players.

Rugby League Week has reported that Foran will visit the Warriors' camp in the next few weeks. There's some obvious hurdles to weigh up and overcome before the Warriors could sign Foran. However, ensuring they do all they can to conquer these should be the top priority for the club during a September when they won't be playing any finals football for the 5th season in a row.

*A Big **THANK YOU** to Sir Peter for his great hospitality at every home game this season. For anyone who hasn't watched a game up in his lounge you need to get up there in 2017; The height of the lounge gives you the best seat in the house where you can accurately judge the width and depth of the players in both teams. And as he rushes round during matches you also get a better feel for the fact that it's actually the PEOPLE of the Warriors and rugby league that Sir Peter loves even more than the game itself. - John Deaker*

2016 NZRL Premiership Rugby League Competition

"DOUBLE HEADER"

Sunday 11th September 2016

Mt Smart Stadium # 1



2.00pm Akarana Falcons Vs

Wellington Orcas



4.00pm Counties Manukau Stingrays Vs

Canterbury Bulls

Entry: \$5 Adults, 16 & Under Free





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

The Mad Butchers Weekly NRL Tipping Comp.

By John Holloway

Final Results

	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>
Picks last week	6/8	5/8	6/8	6/8	4/8	6/8	6/8
Total Season Picks	115/186	117/186	130/186	118/186	123/186	128/186	135/186

WELL THE Tipping trip has reached its destination with a Gold Card finish....that is to say the oldest codgers in the comp finished 1 and 2. High-Tackle Holloway and Jumpin Johnny Coffee, both of the age that qualifies for free ferry trips to Waiheke to visit The Butcher (after 9am). If there was a Tipping trophy I would hold it aloft triumphantly but as there isn't a celebratory beer with a couple of footy mates will have to do.

I need to thank my fellow Tippers for their participation through season 2016. Big thanks to each of you fine guys n gal! Wily Bill Hayward right in the race all the way made the cardinal mistake of a late season trip overseas with "She who will be obeyed" and lost touch with reality. Likewise the Flying Dutchman in the thick of it till several weeks in Europe and Africa queered his pitch.

Montz went to the Olympics, JC battled through an early season burst in Tasmania but the rest of us little piggies stayed home... Super Sue Phelan and Big Joe Vagana showed their adventurous spirit and their time will come!!

No Doubt Sir Peter will be keen to consider the Tipping comp again next year so perhaps we'll be back. Let's see how we go...it was great fun as the Butch has been known to say..."What a Ride mate"

We are free now to sit back for the Finals. The Raiders firmed in my view with another stunning attacking master-class to send the Tigers to mad Monday. I am almost sick of talking up the Green Machines deadly duo (Rapana and Leilua) but they just continue to destroy defenders. The Clinical Storm shortened up the sinking Sharks and Flanagans men may have done their dash, the Shireboys get two bites of the cherry and will need them both.

Bellamy on the other hand has a clear and confident view from the top and will take some shifting. His leading lights, Smith, Cronk, Bromwich, Munster and Chambers set the scene for their sideline swifties Koroi beta and Vunivalu.

Man can they sniff a 4 pointer and ask questions of the best defence. JTs Cowboys will be seeking answers to this in the game of the round. Who will come out ahead? I guess riding the home advantage the settled Storm might force the slightly off colour Rustlers to the second chance saloon. Wild card entry the prowling Panthers have Moylan, Mansour, Cartwright, Peachey, young Mr Cleary and some hard headed frontmen that may spring a surprise or two.

They might start by putting the bite on Dessys bad tempered Bulldogs. The Titans will take pride in grabbing a Finals spot albeit the bottom rung but it's a passing pleasure, put the house on Bennetts bucking Broncos to despatch them home first cab on the rank. Still unlike others the unfancied Gold Coasters can take confidence in that fact that they over-achieved massively. Even High-Tackle tipped them for the dreaded spoon.

OK lets get to it...Once again the journey ends prematurely for our mighty Warriors. 11,000 hardy hearted followers supported the away back to old blighty farewell to a true warrior Thomas Leuluai and a soggy nite finale at the Home of the Faithful, Mt Smart.

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Thankfully for once my group had the hospitality comforts of a warm and dry corporate box instead of our “uncovered bay 33 Season seats”. There was less comfort on the paddock however with our boys starting bright but fading away.

When I look at our final standing/stats the elephant in the room is the “points against” column, very ugly reading. Stands to reason that everything stems from there? Experts clearly agree that Defence is the starting block for a good performance

if we can fix, or at least improve that discipline it follows that the pressures that cause other “fail areas” would lessen, hopefully dramatically. Go figure. Would love to be a fly on the wall at the up-coming one on one player review sessions.

You can bet some hard questions will be asked of names big and little. 8 o'clockish the night closed in on our last walk, head down in the rain to the carpark. My Son-in-law Julian disappointed but confirming we would go the season ticket route again and my grandson Jack Stone ever hopeful, as a chat and a new selfie with a very up-beat and positive RogerTuivasa-shek had given him cause to look forward to next year. So be it.

See ya later alligator, thank you Sir Peter and thanks to all for your support of the Newsletter.

My final words....May the fleas of a thousand Camels find a home in the crotch of those nincompoops in the bloody BUNKER!!!

Listen to the Vodafone Warriors NSW Side, coached by legend Stacey Jones, play the Newtown Jets live on Steele Sports



The Finals 2016



Wests Tigers Vs Wgong Roos

Newtown Jets Vs New Zealand

**INTRUST SUPER PREMIERSHIP
FINALS WEEK 2
PEPPER STADIUM
SUNDAY 11TH SEPTEMBER**

**LIVE COVERAGE STARTS
3PM**

**STEELE
Sports.COM.AU**

Papakura Make History with Club Double - ARL

THE PAKAKURA Sea Eagles have claimed their first ever SAS Fox Memorial Premiership title, downing the Pt Chevalier Pirates 12-8 at Mt Smart Stadium #2 on Saturday, September 3.

Pt Chevalier had won the last three titles, but found themselves trailing behind struggling with ball control.

Papakura scored in the opening minutes with wing George Edwards following through lock Roman Hifo to cross on the left edge.

An unsuccessful conversion left the score 4-0 to the Sea Eagles.

With 6 minutes remaining in the first half and a penalty to Papakura, halfback Reece Joyce took the kick to lead 6-0 at the break.

The second period saw Papakura display some excellent resolve to work their way down field before centre Andrew Tusiane crossed to get the Sea Eagles up 10-0.

Finally holding onto the ball and building some pressure, Pt Chevalier lock Dylan Moses proved a game changer, crashing over from close range to score.

With the kick going out wide, the Pirates trailed 10-4.

Some gritty defence and a big carry from Pt Chevalier prop Siliga Kepaoa saw the side just metres out from the line.

Shuffling the ball quickly to the left in an attempt to score again, Papakura's Hifo busted through to pursuit down field before being stopped by fullback Siua Otunuku.

Closing in the final 10 minutes and only metres from the line, another penalty gave the Sea Eagles an extra two to lead 12-4.

But Pt Chevalier weren't done yet.

With two minutes left on the clock, the Pirates crossed on the left edge where wing Saula Solomona finished.

Pt Chevalier were unsuccessful in converting and with under a minute remaining, the Sea Eagles had done enough to claim the 2016 SAS Fox Memorial title.

"I'm lost for words," said Papakura captain Roman Hifo.

"I've been at the club for 8 years now. It's taken me this long but it's something we've been working hard for."

"We started with the Sportsafe ARL Nines in Whitianga and knew if we put the work in we could get the job done.

"We finally did it," he quipped.

The win coupled with the women's side claiming their championship title in the earlier game has served history in both the Papakura Rugby League Club and Auckland Rugby League; winning their first Fox Memorial title but also, the first club to win both the men's and women's premierships in the same season.

"The club is in a really good place right now," said Hifo.

"The directors, chairman and everyone behind the scenes - they've put in so much time and effort into building this club.

"They've done a great job and I take my hat off to them."

Continued on next page..



Continued from previous page..

In the Women's Premiership, the Papakura Sisters took down defending champions Manurewa Marlins Wahine 34-26.

A clash between two sides loaded with Kiwi Ferns talent, the grand final promised to be a match of high quality.

The Sisters biggest strength was their exceptional defence, which was no surprise on the day with the side leaking only 46 points in their games played during the regular season.

But the Marlins, who have the best attack in the competition didn't make it easy for them.

Finding themselves on the back foot in the first half of the match and down 6-0 at half time, Marlins wing and recently acclaimed Women's Player of the Year Jocephy Daniels crossed twice to trail by two.

It was a case of size v speed, which saw Papakura overtake the speedy Marlins Wahine in the end to claim the Women's Premiership title.

Papakura Sisters captain Kahurangi Peters said she was proud of the girls efforts despite having to play catch up in the last 40 minutes.

"We managed to make the grand final again and with it the Women's title so I am very, very proud," said Peters.

"We weren't going to have a team this season but we managed to scramble up a group and pick a few more up on the way. We stuck it out and now we've won the grand final.

"Hopefully we've inspired some of the girls who have come to watch the footy today.

"Im proud to play footy, passionate about rugby league and hope to see the Women's competition grow from here."

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Zacharia Tippins wins SAS Fox Memorial Player of the Year

GLENORA HOOKER Zacharia Tippins was named the Auckland Rugby League SAS Fox Memorial Player of the Year at the Annual Premier Awards Evening on Wednesday, August 31.

In his first season playing for the Glenora Bears, Tippins helped his side through the regular season to challenge heavyweights and former club Mt Albert in the first round of Fox finals.

While he has had a taste of NRL football debuting for the Warriors NSW Cup in 2015 and playing two games for the ISP side this year, he has also had stints playing for the Akarana Falcons and NZ Maori Residents.

Decided by a combination of club-nominated Player of the Day votes and 3,2,1 best and fairest points from referees, the 26-year-old surpassed challenges from Howick prop Tony Tuia who was named Prop of the Year for the second year straight, and Pt Chevalier wing Saula Solomona who was awarded both top try scorer and Wing of the Year.

"There are plenty of talented players named in the Team of the Year, I'm still very surprised," said Tippins from the function at Alexandra Park in Auckland.

Tippins admits it's been challenging transitioning from Mt Albert to Glenora, but he believes the move has helped improve his game.

"It can get tough when you're playing against your mates and you're all hungry for the win," he said.

"But it's been refreshing and the shift has definitely helped me to improve my game - tonight is a credit to that."

"We didn't make the final, but to be the first player from Glenora to be awarded the Player of the Year is definitely something to be proud of," he quipped.

"A big thanks to the club, the boys and everyone behind the scenes. This wouldn't have been possible without them."

In other major awards given out on the night, Mt Albert halfback Zae Wallace was named Rookie of the Year, winning another piece of silverware after being awarded Auckland's College Rugby League Player of the Year last month.

The 17-year-old played a stellar first year in the first division competition, collecting 46 points while playing 16 games for the premier side and 3 for the reserves.

"It's been an awesome experience playing for the Lions in the Fox Memorial this year," said Wallace.

"It's tough but I know I'm playing against the best, and learning from the best players in Auckland."

Manurewa rookie centre Joephy Daniels was named the Marketing Works Women's Player of the Year.

The 19-year-old helped the Manurewa Marlins Wahine through to last weekend's grand final.

"I didn't expect this at all," said Daniels.

"Personally I think this has been my best season, so I guess the hard work is paying off.

"I have to give credit to my talented team mates, coach and club for all their support and guidance this year. I wouldn't be here if it wasn't for them."

Daniels said her debut in the Counties Manukau Stingrays last year and being selected to play again against Akarana in this year's Warriors Women in League clash has been a driving force to one day play for the Kiwi Ferns.

Continued on next page..

"Wearing the black jersey is definitely a dream of mine."

Daniels admits having the support of Kiwi Fern and Manurewa captain Sarina Fiso is another source of motivation.

"Sarina has been my idol since I started playing league."

"She leads by example all the time - both on and off the field, she's encouraging and always gives advice to improve my game."

Pt Chevalier stand off Jonathan Carl keeps the Lance Painter Rose Bowl for another year after being named Goal Kicker of the Year.

While in the second division, Ponsonby lock Nukurua Ngere was named the Crown Lift Trucks Sharman Cup Player of the Year.

Papakura coach Richie Blackmore was also named ARL Coach of the Year, guiding the Sea Eagles through the season to pick up the Giltrap Nissan Rukutai Shield (minor premiership), Konica Minolta Roope Rooster (challenge trophy) and more recently, the SAS Fox Memorial Shield.



Player of the Year - Zacharia Tippins (Glenora)



Women's Player of the Year - Jocephy Daniels (Manurewa)



Top try-scorer Wing of the Year - Saula Solomona (Pt Chevalier)



Coach of the Year - Richie Blackmore (Papakura)

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



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BIG LEAGUE

THIS WEEK IN BIG LEAGUE'S HUGE FINALS WEEK 1 ISSUE...

Jam-packed with FEATURES and NEWS, plus columnist BRENT TATE; plus NRL, HOLDEN CUP, NSW CUP, QLD CUP and RON MASSEY CUP team lists and a FULL NRL DRAW.

FEATURES

- Everyone expects the Bulldogs to put on a show in the finals, considering their coach's great record in September – but players in the club agree things won't just click together for them against the Panthers. "A lot has got to change and we've got to have a good hard look at ourselves," **Josh Jackson** said. "We can't get stuck with the false sense of security, that just because we've done this before it's going to happen again."

- There is plenty to stop when the Cowboys come at you but Storm skipper **Cameron Smith** has his eyes on one man – Dally M Medal contender **Jason Taumalolo**. "A really important part of our defensive effort this week is to try and contain him. We're not going to take him out of the game, he's that good of a player, we've just got to try and minimise the impact he has."

- The Sharks' playing group has played 126 finals games. The Raiders? 16. It's a startling statistic but Canberra coach **Ricky Stuart** says his team is confident enough to defy the odds.

- Also, **Preston Campbell** says the Titans are no longer a 'retirement village'; **Corey Parker** is emotionally ready to face sudden-death football, whether it's his last game or not; **Brent Tate** says Queensland is rugby league's new thriving ground and **Joel Thompson** talks us through his initiatives off the field.

PLUS... The Analyst explains why where you **finish on the ladder** matters and we look back on the **Top 8 finals battlers**.

AND: Little League, lower grade previews and a Jesse Bromwich poster.



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Vodafone Warriors Footy Clinic Holiday Programme is Back

AFTER TWO successful kids' footy clinic these year we will again be holding a series of clinics during the upcoming school holidays.

There will be three clinics, with each clinic lasting two days. The clinics will be separated into age-groups.

Footy Clinic 1: (ages 10-12) Tuesday 27 - Wednesday 28 September

Footy Clinic 2: (9-11 year olds) Thursday 29 - Friday 30 September

Footy Clinic 3: (7-9 year olds) Tuesday 4 - Wednesday 5 October

As a valued member, you have priority booking access to register participants for the clinic of your choice before registrations are opened to the public.

The holiday programme run by the club will feature a range of activities which will put young fans in the shoes of professional rugby league athletes. As well as being shown around Mount Smart Stadium and the club's facilities, they'll train like a Vodafone Warrior and take part in fun activities. Don't delay as our last holiday programme was a sell out!

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

The programme will be catered to the age group within the clinic and will run each day beginning at 9am through to 3pm.

Booking forms must be completed and returned with a participant consent form.

By returning the completed booking form and participant consent form, parents/guardians agree to the terms and conditions as laid out in the parent confirmation letter.

There is a maximum capacity for each clinic and bookings will only be confirmed once payment has been successfully received.

PLEASE NOTE all NRL players will be unavailable over this round of Footy Clinics. The clinics will be run by former Vodafone Warrior and Kiwis representative Jerome Ropati and current Kiwi Fern Georgia Hale.

[Click here for Consent Form](#)

[Click here for Booking Form](#)

Brunner Bulls 16s Team Win Grand Final



16s had just received medals and trophy for winning the main comp and grand final.



At their clubrooms after the game.



Brunner 16s and Suburbs 16s after final. Score 32 to 16.



Brunner Bulls 16s team photo.

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ISP Finals Team to Face Newtown

By Richard Becht



VODAFONE WARRIORS coach Stacey Jones has been able to call on 12 players with NRL experience for Sunday's Intrust Super Premiership week two finals clash against the Newtown Jets at Pepper Stadium in Penrith (6.35pm kick-off local time; 8.35pm NZT).

With the NRL season over, wing Ken Maumalo and hooker Nathaniel Roache return to the ISP line-up as the Vodafone Warriors make their bid to reach week three of the competition's playoffs for the first time since the then-Auckland Vulcans made the 2011 grand final (live coverage on SKY Sport 2 from 8.00pm on Sunday).

Also back in the side is Roache's fellow 2016 NRL rookie Jazz Tevaga, who missed last Sunday's 21-14 week one finals win over Penrith with injury.

Earlier in the season Maumalo scored nine tries in 10 ISP appearances before being promoted to the NRL side for 10 outings. In all he has 21 tries in 25 ISP games.

Roache has split his season between the club's NRL, ISP and NYC teams while Tevaga has alternated between NRL and ISP duty.

Jones has shuffled his backline resources with Charnze Nicoll-Klokstad, the only player to appear in every one of the team's games this year, named to start at fullback after originally being selected in the centres last week. Matt Allwood, an 18-game NRL player, comes into the centres with veteran former Newcastle and Wigan centre George Carmont and Maumalo and Henare Wells on the wings.

The starting pack named comprises players who have all had NRL experience this year including another 2016 rookie in big front rower Toafofoa Siple and James Gavet, the most experienced forward with 25 NRL appearances.

In two regular season matches against Newtown – Cronulla's feeder club – the Vodafone Warriors have a win and a loss. They won 20-18 at Mount Smart Stadium in March but were trounced 38-6 at Henson Park in June.

While the Vodafone Warriors, fifth in the regular season, beat eighth-ranked Penrith last Sunday, the fourth-ranked Jets began their finals campaign with a 12-30 loss to minor premiers the Mounties on Saturday.

- 1 Charnze Nicoll-Klokstad
- 2 Henare Wells
- 3 George Carmont
- 4 Matt Allwood
- 5 Ken Maumalo
- 6 Ata Hingano
- 7 Mason Lino (C)
- 8 James Gavet
- 9 Nathaniel Roache
- 10 Toafofoa Siple
- 11 John Palavi
- 12 Shaun Lane
- 13 Jazz Tevaga

Interchange

- 14 James Bell
- 15 Upu Poching
- 16 Patrick Siple
- 17 Viliami Kaveinga
- 18 Erin Clark
- 20 Marata Niukore

VODAFONE WARRIORS v NEWTOWN JETS

Pepper Stadium, Penrith

6.35pm, Sunday, September 11





HERE WE are at Esperance Western Australia, Monday morning at 10.00 21 deg, same as yesterday when we watched the Warriors final game for 2016. Which was a tuff day for the boys.

To date we have driven some 16,000 km from Melbourne through Sydney, Brisbane, Mt Isa , Darwin and Perth. We haven't missed a game but certainly missed being at Mt Smart and in the Stacey Jones Lounge.

Special thanks to Susan and Shanice in the Warriors office for posting Warriors Car Stickers for the back of "The Camel".

We have met some absolutely wonderful Ozzies, had to intro a few of them to the "REAL" game! and copped a bit of stick as well!

Now heading to Sydney 3500 km for the Grand Final, see you all there.

Love to all, Ian and Marcia Carpenter – Vodafone Warriors Fans and Members travelling around Aussie

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

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