

VODAFONE



Sir Peter Leitch Club

AT MT SMART STADIUM, HOME OF THE MIGHTY VODAFONE WARRIORS

29th March 2017

Newsletter #163

We love our loyal Vodafone Warriors supporters!



Our fans are the backbone of the club! Thanks for your support.



Vodafone Warriors Fans at Jubilee Oval

Vodafone Warriors v Gold Coast Titans

THIS Sunday 2 April

11.30am: Gates and Lounge Open
11.45am: NYC Kick off
1.45pm: ISP Kick off
3.00pm: Warriors players at Funzone
3.40pm: TShirt Cannon
4.00pm: NRL Kick off

Foran Named at Standoff

by Richard Becht

VODAFONE WARRIORS head coach Stephen Kearney is optimistic Kieran Foran will be able to make his belated club debut this week after naming him at standoff for Sunday's fifth-round NRL encounter against Gold Coast at Mount Smart Stadium (4.00pm kick-off; match day sponsor: SKYCITY).

A hamstring twinge in the team's warm-up forced the 26-year-old Kiwi international out of last Sunday's clash against St George Illawarra in Sydney.

However, Kearney said today that Foran is now in line to appear for his new club for the first time in front of his home crowd. If he is cleared, he will become Vodafone Warrior #217.

"Kieran felt a twinge in his hamstring and in the warm-up and it wasn't worth the risk to play him," he said.

"He had good power in the leg at the time and has responded well since. He's making good progress.

"We're certainly hopeful he will be able to play and will give him every opportunity to prove his fitness."

In the reshuffle forced by Foran's late defection on Sunday, Kearney moved Tuimoala Lolohea to stand-off, centre David Fusitu'a to Lolohea's spot on the right wing and 18th man Blake Ayshford into the centres.

Ayshford backed up from an 80-minute effort in the Vodafone Warriors' Intrust Super Premiership side's 21-14 win over Illawarra in Wollongong with another 80 minutes against the Dragons in what was his 147th NRL career appearance. The 28-year-old Ayshford has been named on the right wing today.

The starting pack named is the same as the one used against the Dragons.

The bench again includes Sam Lisone as well as James Gavet and Ligi Sao, who both had their first NRL outings of the season last weekend. In 43

minutes on the field, Gavet made 129 metres from 15 runs, Jacob Lillyman the only Vodafone Warriors forward to carry the ball more with 151 metres from 15 runs.

Named in the #14 jersey and in line for his first NRL game this year is the club's 2016 rookie of the year Nathaniel Roache. The hooker impressed in his first game after a long lay-off when he played almost 60 minutes for the ISP side, making 111 metres from 12 runs, scoring a try and also coming up with 28 tackles and no misses.

Others on the extended bench are Albert Vete, Bunty Afoa, Mason Lino and Ata Hingano.

A feature of Sunday's return to Mount Smart Stadium will be the chance members and fans will have to honour the remarkable Simon Mannering following his club record 262nd NRL appearance last week. A special presentation will be made to him after the game.

Centre Solomone Kata reaches his 50-game milestone this Sunday after starting his NRL career in the opening round of the 2015 season.

This will be the 21st encounter between the Vodafone Warriors and the Titans with the home side holding a 13-7 advantage in the 20 match-ups so far. The Vodafone Warriors have won the last three contests and 11 of the last 12 since 2011.

VODAFONE WARRIORS

1 Roger Tuivasa-Sheck (C)	12 Ryan Hoffman
2 Blake Ayshford	13 Simon Mannering
3 David Fusitu'a	Interchange:
4 Solomone Kata	14 Nathaniel Roache
5 Ken Maumalo	15 James Gavet
6 Kieran Foran	16 Sam Lisone
7 Shaun Johnson	17 Ligi Sao
8 Charlie Gubb	18 Albert Vete
9 Issac Luke	20 Bunty Afoa
10 Jacob Lillyman	21 Mason Lino
11 Bodene Thompson	22 Mafoa'aeata Hingano

Should Have Saved My Money

By David Kemeys

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



I'M GETTING tired of this. Bloody Dragons.
Even a car prang couldn't stop Gareth Widdop.

He smashed the motor up on the way to work, shrugged it off, played like a champion, and our season took another – according to some stunningly predictable – turn for the worse.

Widdop was in the accident only hours before kick-off yet still managed to turn out and get into the St George history books, joining the 500-point club in their 26-12 NRL win over us.

Compare that to us.

We have Kieran Foran, and there is a man on a hiding to nothing, supposedly in the line-up, and what happens, he gets hurt in the warm-up.

The warm-up!

Give me strength.

I say he is on a hiding to nothing because there must be enormous pressure on that poor guy. He is a fine player with a record many would envy, but he isn't the Messiah, and expecting him to resurrect the Warriors is a bit too much to ask. Of course if he is not at his best from day one (whenever that might be) the knockers will have a field day.

Much was written and said about Foran before the weekend, and much was written and said in the aftermath of the injury that kept him out.

And some of it was amazing even for incredibly shitty standards of the New Zealand press.

One particular bloke even suggested it was all some sort of massive conspiracy and there was never any intention to play him, and that it was just an exercise in milking the publicity an interest that surrounds him.

Man did not go to the moon either, and by the way, every truly intelligent individual knows the CIA actually brought the Twin Towers down.

Bad luck seems to be the only kind the Warriors have.

And there was more of it against the Dragons, though playing ineptly did not help our cause either. In Sydney for the weekend I suffered the misfortune of every NRL supporter I happened to bump into, giving me chapter and verse on what is wrong with our club, how to fix it, and how sorry they feel for us all enduring what we do at Mt Smart.

Continued on next page...



Ken Maumalo during warm up



Simon Mannerling's 262nd jersey

Continued from previous page...

Funnily enough it did not make me feel one jot better.

Oaky the Foran injury was laughable and bloody typical of life as a Warriors supporter.

But we still had a decent side, with Tui Lolohea into No 6, Blake Ayshford coming in to partner Solomon Kata in the centres, with David Fusitu'a out to the flank – where in my humble view he should have been from day one.

So a 63% completion rate, with the ball being spilled more often than lager at a beer fest, was difficult to swallow, as was the 20-8 halftime lead we gave up.

Issac Luke had at least got us on the board, and when Ken Maumalo went over I did what a dedicated Warriors fan will do – thought there was hope.

I should have known better,

The Dragons got try number 4 –that's 4 tries in 54 minutes, close enough to giving up a try every 13 minutes – I understood what I should have already known. It would be a third-straight loss after four rounds.

“At this level you just can't compete with that amount of mistakes,” coach Stephen Kearney said.

One Dragons fan I spoke to summed it up more succinctly: “You guys are f...ing useless.”

We have played the Dragons 13 times across the ditch and you know how many times we've won – once. Mind you, we did smash them 24-0 and reduce Miles Davis to tears last year at Mt Smart. Mind you about that mind you, it was our first win over the Dragons in a decade.

Former skipper Simon Mannering's 262nd club appearance set a new record, and he must have wondered why he bothered.

Dale Won't Budge

Say what you like about league scribe Dale Budge, the man at least has the courage to say what he thinks. This week it's blow the whole club up and start again.

If it were that simple I'm confident we'd have gone down that path already.

Sometimes I am tempted to think Budge's writing is for the many haters out there, but what really gets under my skin is he can build a good case for what he writes.

According to him we've tried changing coaches and players, signed stars, and promoted juniors all to no avail.

Mr Positive reckons it will keep failing too, because we don't look at what we need, have no balance, and no “winning DNA”. He chips in our forwards “might well be the worst in the NRL”.

Tell us what you really think mate, stop sitting on the fence.

He did: “I'd love to say dump Hoffman, Lillyman, Vatuvei, Kata, Lolohea, Maumalo, Ayshford, Matulino, Thompson etc. Problem is they are committed to those players from a cap space perspective.”

I wouldn't hold your breath for a free box at the game Mr Budge. And remember this, you get paid to be there, we have to pay our own way.

More on the next page...

NO ADVERTS ARE PAID FOR IN THIS NEWSLETTER

Take A Tiger By The Tail

If there is one thing that gives me comfort at the moment it is that at least we aren't the Tigers.

Coach Jason Taylor punted.

Then again so were Wayne Pearce, Terry Lamb, Tim Sheens and Michael Potter.

They can't all be crap, surely.

The Tigers have made the playoffs only three times since their inaugural season in 2000, mind you, they did win it in 2005.

Even we have made the finals six times since our inception in 1995.

Probably regret writing this when we lose to the Tigers.

Could It Get Any Worse?

Surely the only way is up.

It's only four games in and there are plenty of other sides sitting on a 1 win 3 loss record.

But two weeks of pretty poor performances. Week one we won but still gave up 22, week two 26 points leaked, week three 24, and 26 again at the weekend.

Next week we take on the Titans who sit above us but are also 1 win and 3 losses. Lose this one at Mt Smart on Sunday and watch the stands empty.

I won't make any friends at Penrose saying this but Kearney needs to act.

The Dogs and Dragons are hardly title contenders, yet neither had difficulty with us.

It's hard not to be affected by the constant braying of "same old Warriors" we have to endure every time you listen to Radio Sport.

And it does look like the same old problems – leaky defence, no power going forward, handling awful, completion rate worse.

The axe must be getting sharpened.

VODAFONE
WARRIORS

V

GOLD COAST
TITANS

Match Day Sponsor
SKYCITY

THIS SUNDAY
MT SMART STADIUM

Kick off 4pm, Mt Smart Stadium. Adults from \$15; Children from \$10
Buy now at ticketsk.co.nz/vodafonewarriors. Ticket terms and conditions, purchase conditions and transaction fees apply.

The poster features a dynamic action shot of a player in a black Vodafone Warriors jersey running with the ball, pursued by a player in a light blue Gold Coast Titans jersey. The background is a dark, textured blue with white and red splatters. The Vodafone logo is visible on the player's jersey.

Wally Lewis Isn't Coming

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)



PERHAPS EVERY newsletter and press release issued by the Warriors should be topped by a banner headline proclaiming **KIERAN FORAN IS COMING**. The members and fans would in theory be buoyed by the much heralded arrival of their club's major off-season signing. In hindsight, the headline might need the addition of another word – **SOON** – because it does seem to be taking forever. As disappointments from the first three rounds mounted, expectations increased the world-class five-eighth would be just the man to right a listing ship. But after Sunday's horrendous hamstringing happening make that **SOON, WE THINK**.

There is a precedent for seeking to boost a club's morale by heralding the arrival of such a saviour. Back in the English winter of 1983-84 struggling Wakefield Trinity boldly signed the great Wally Lewis – then ranked as the best five-eighth in the world – in a bid to stave off relegation from the first division. In its 90-year history Trinity's only major trophy triumphs had been in the early 1960s. The 1980s team was showing no signs of recreating those all too brief glory days when Trinity had held the Challenge Cup and Championship title. All it had to show was an increasingly dusty and forlorn trophy cabinet.

This was five years before the formation of the Brisbane Broncos. State of Origin was in its infancy and, as mentioned, England was still more than a decade away from introducing Super League and switching to a summer season. Lewis was weary after touring Britain and France with the 1982 Kangaroos and going back to Britain for three games for Queensland in 1983. He wanted a break. When Trinity offered £150 per game for 10 matches, Lewis told his manager to turn it down and ask for an improbable £1000 per game. They did not know the bid was backed by businessman Barry Hough and were gobsmacked when their demand was accepted.

So Lewis packed his boots and arrived at ageing Belle View Stadium, the club's home since rugby league was founded in 1895, to discover Trinity's battered and bruised team had won only two matches all season. Lewis earned every penny of his ten grand. Trinity won five times during his stay and Lewis scored three tries in one of them, two in another. But there is no happy ending. After he was required to return to Brisbane to prepare for his 1984 club season, hapless Trinity lost all of their other games and was dropped to the second division.

Officials pondered how they could keep spirits up in the west Yorkshire town, known for little else than a battling footy club which derives its quaint name from being started by a church group in 1873? They simply renamed the Wakefield Trinity fan magazine **WALLY LEWIS IS COMING**, emblazing those words across the top in bold capitals. (Note, they did not claim he was coming BACK). Suffice to say the headline ensured bumper sales until the penny dropped. But the readers saw the humour in it. The magazine's new name stayed, contributing to the legend of Lewis and his memorable stint at Belle Vue.

In an interview years later Lewis recalled there had been initial resentment from most of the Trinity players because of the size of his match payments. But his team-mates came around when told his wages were covered by Barry Hough and not the club itself. Word spread to other teams though. Lewis remembered he was singled out by one opponent who whacked him in the head and asked, "how are you feeling, thousand-pounds-a-match-man?" It went on and on. Near fulltime he again got Lewis across the nose and asked the question about how he was feeling. Lewis smiled and replied: "About nine hundred pounds better than you, you pommy bastard!"

In 2017 Wakefield Trinity is still battling, these days to retain its Super League status, and is still playing at Belle Vue, although the ground has been sold and, not for the first time, there are dreams of a more modern venue in the future. Wally Lewis never did go back.

After this weekend the next home game is:
Sunday the 9th of April against the Parramatta Eels

The Birth of the “Seabulls”

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)



IT WAS a long time ago but I can still vividly recall standing on the sidelines on a rainy, windswept Sunday afternoon at Taylorville Domain alongside my relatives watching cousin Brian Senior playing for proud West Coast rugby league club Brunner. The raucous Brunner fans (or should that be fanatics?) lined one side of the field, the opposing supporters lined the other. My club was actually Marist and I was careful to keep my green-and-gold scarf tucked out of sight inside the collar of my overcoat in case the locals needed a sacrificial victim at fulltime.

If Brunner was hosting Runanga (or, for that matter, if Runanga was home to Brunner on an equally rainy, windswept Sunday afternoon at O'Brien Park) we had the privilege of watching two players who in 2007 were to be named in the NZRL Team of the Century. The rugged Brunner forwards were led by ball-playing hooker Jock Butterfield, who made a record 36 Test appearances for the Kiwis. Runanga's backline spearhead was stand-off half George Menzies, New Zealand's most travelled sportsman in the 1950s and early 1960s. Their contrasting assets were monumental to their clubs. Big Jock would batter his way upfield and slip a deft pass, little Geordie could dance on water around even the tightest defences.

They had plenty of skilled assistants too. Brunner arguably fielded the most intimidating club pack in New Zealand. Alongside Butterfield was his lieutenant Trevor Kilkelly, with whom he had won a string of Canterbury championships for Sydenham before they returned to their West Coast heritage. Colin McMaster was the third Kiwi in the Brunner forwards, though Frank Hasson had been a Test reserve. Scrum-half Mike Casserley played in a South Island team which beat North Island. Outside him, Johnny Menzies (a cousin of George) was as tough as any forward, and I'm proud to say fullback Brian Senior played pretty well for West Coast against the 1961 Kangaroos.

Runanga also boasted a Kiwis prop in Reg Hart. Menzies had quality backs outside him too. Centre Reese Griffiths was good enough to be mentioned in the same breath as Menzies – whereas the Brunner mob talked glowingly of “Jock and Trevor” so the Runanga supporters spoke with pride of “Geordie and Reesey”. Wing Arnold Green toured Australia with the 1956 Kiwis. Fresh-faced fullback Bruce Mann was one of the unlucky ones. Chosen for the 1965 tour to Britain and France, Mann broke his jaw in a provincial match

against Wellington before the team departed. West Coasters offered to raise the money and send him anyway but Mann modestly declined, saying he did not want to be a distraction to his replacement.

This was a golden era for the game on the Coast. Marist's inspiration was centre Graham Kennedy, a Test captain, and around him were fellow Kiwis Kevin Dixon, Neville Tiller and Leo Brown. Future 30-Test Kiwis forward Tony Coll was a ballboy. We were “townies” from Greymouth, and needed to be strong in mind and body to take on the hard nuts from up the Grey Valley. Not just from coal-mining villages Brunner and Runanga either. Blackball, another coal-mining mecca, beat top Auckland clubs in the early post-war years and, across the Grey River, timber milling centre Ngahere was another doughty rival. As juniors we went to school with them during the week and we knocked the crap out of each other on weekends.

But times have changed. Mines and mills have closed. The townships where the miners and mill workers lived have shrunk. West Coast's finest export, unfortunately, is its youth, and those who show potential at rugby league have long gone to Canterbury (Quentin Pongia, Brent Stuart, Whetu Taewa) or further afield seeking to further their careers. Yet the talent still flows along. Melbourne Storm forward Slade Griffin is a nephew of Runanga's 1982 Kiwis hooker John Griffin, while 20-year-old prop or second-rower Jordan Pinnock arrived at the Warriors this season via Brunner, Halswell and Newcastle. As numbers shrank Blackball and Ngahere amalgamated in 1969 under the name of Waro-Rakau (meaning wood and coal).

Now Runanga and Brunner – which were both formed in 1919 -- have also combined in a four-team competition which also includes Cobden-Kohinoor (Slade Griffin's junior club), Suburbs and Waro-Rakau. Marist dropped out of senior football late last century. Taylorville Domain is now a wasteland and Brunner's home games are played across the river at Dobson. O'Brien Park is still Runanga's home ground. Butterfield and Kilkelly are no longer with us. Menzies, Griffiths and Green all passed away last year. In their playing days clubs did not have nicknames, but over time Runanga became the Seagulls and Brunner the Bulls. What else could they call themselves in 2017, then, than the Runanga Brunner Seabulls!

Some Days Are Diamonds...

By John Holloway



AND SOME days are stones....the only upside to the weekend was that it wasn't ruined till late on Sunday night. The footy Gods were not on our side (again) and coping with the Foran situation just before kickoff was a body blow to our team. I will be honest and say that looking at the form of St George and our record against them (12 losses in 13 outings) I thought we would come second anyway. That's thought, not hoped. What I didn't expect was an absolute horror error count. 63% completion don't cut it and the number of bad passes thrown and reasonable ones dropped beggared belief. If we had made even a slightly better job of finishing breaks and sets we could easily have turned the 12-26 result around. I take my hat off to the magnificent Warrior Simon Mannering and to Shaun Johnson for his effort but those were the only bright spots for mine. The Warriors as usual are pushing the envelope of fan favour and need to stand up sooner rather than later, with the Titans/Eels/Raiders/Storm on the upcoming menu it's not exactly a tantalising prospect. The opening matches saw the unbeaten Roosters roast the Bunnies 20 to 6 with Michael Gordon showing a new lease on life with the Bondi boys and Latrelle Mitchell continues to showcase abilities which will one day make him a superstar. The Panthers moved into top gear to expose the Knights 40 to zip. Emerging maori maestro TM Martin is starting to really blossom at standoff as well, he and young Mr Cleary will be a growing force...and that Peachey is a peach. Another dishing out a hiding was the Sea Eagles who are showing more confidence and real Brookvale grit again giving already under fire Dessy Hasler yet more headaches with a 36 nil Bulldog bashing. I didn't rate Uate pre-season but he is showing major signs of life. DCE and the Trbojevics had huge games, gonna get better too. The Bulldogs pack looks large but toothless. The Broncos V Raiders was more like a contest two very good sides that could go all the way....shame there had to be a loser at 13/12, what a ball of fire Rapana is on the wing or for that matter anywhere as he pops up everywhere looking for a break and fighting for every metre. he and brutal centre partner Leilua are being called "Leipana" now ala brad Pitt/Angelina Jolie...Brangelina. Maybe not quite so eye candy photogenic in a tux. Another big dance candidate is reigning title holder Sharks and they showed credentials subduing Cory Normans enigmatic Eels 20/6. Keeping Parra stars Radradra and flyer French quiet was a feat. Young rake Brailey looking promising but will be under pressure with lively and pugnacious oppo Segeyaro back in town from pommyland. The Cowboys got up at home 32/26 over neighbours the Titans but not without a struggle. Two tries to Cohen Hess a prop to watch, tough, driven and knows how to get thru the line, the Maroons will be looking closely at him with Scott and the Rhino out of action now. The master/apprentice duel of Thurston and young comer Taylor was a good watch also, the young blokes not a JT yet but he has guts and skills that will make him top drawer in time. Prodigal talent Kaylen Ponga is yet to declare for Aussies or Kiwis but the way he is playing I hope he votes black, The early game Sunday saw the Storm "wither the storm" to defeat the Tigers 22/14. The Westies fired early going 14 zip but got run down by the Melbourne machine. They lose a bit of bite without multi-talented Munster but Billy the kid at the back is looking ominous. Cronk looked off colour but he and calm and collected Smith still got the job done. I don't think big dance but definitely the top 8.

Well the Tipping week was good for High-Tackle taking the max 8 from 8 in the NRL Tipping comp. Not often that happen but I guess I wont be alone with results generally panning out with the odds.

This week I fancy The Broncos to buck the Bulldogs, The Roosters to just get past the Sea Eagles, Cowboys home advantage over the Rabbitohs, Sharks way too good for the Knights, Raiders too many guns for the Eels, Storm maybe maybe not versus the prowling Panthers, the Tigers could be toothless without half Brooks and down the drain to the Dragons. Then the big one for the faithful. The Warriors and the Titans go to it at Mt Smart on Sunday night. A continuing question mark over Foran. Lets get in behind our Rogers boys and see if we can help them get up and running, they need us.

Kia Kaha brothers.

NO ADVERTS ARE PAID FOR IN THIS NEWSLETTER



TRAIN FOR YOUR GAME

#CommittedToTheGame

© Canterbury Limited 2017

SHOP NOW



IT HAS been more than a week now since Jason Taylor has been sacked but the Tigers are still in the news. They did show some fight against the Storm on Sunday but were beaten in the end and suffered their third successive loss. Sydney's Sunday Telegraph ran an article showing that since 2012, the Tigers have made 53 staff changes and this does not include the playing roster. These changes are Chairpersons (2), Chief Executives (4), Head Coaches (4), Assistant Coaches (11), Football Managers (5), Consultants (1), Head of Player Recruitment (2), High Performance/Strength and Conditioning Coaches (10), Physiotherapists (3), Doctors (3), NYC under 20s Coaches and Staff (8). Even more alarming to me is the money they are paying for players and others now not involved with the club. This includes at least \$700,000 for Robbie Farah to play with Souths and \$200,000 for Curtis Sironen to wear a Manly jersey. As well as this, Jason Taylor has to be paid out \$250,000 or so and probably a former coach, Tim Sheens, now coaching with Hull KR in England, is still owed money. While I am not sure of the exact amounts owing to the men I have mentioned, but I have been told my figures are good estimates. Monday's newspapers in Sydney reported that Ivan Cleary is the favourite to be given the Tigers Head Coaching Role and no doubt he will want more than a one year deal. He and his staff wont come cheap and this will add further burdens to the Tigers financial position. I hope the Tigers Board show some financial responsibility in the remainder of 2017. It is not too easy to find out the names of the current Board but I believe the two Independents are Chairperson Marina Go and Rosemary Sinclair, while Danny Stapleton and James Myatt are the Balmain duo. The five Western Suburbs people are Simon Cook, Mike Bailey, Tony Andreacchio, Michael Lubinskis and Rick Wayde, while Justin Pascoe is the club's CEO. I also believe that Wests own 75 percent of the joint venture while Balmain retains 25 percent and that all debts to the NRL have now been settled.

The 2017 South Coast Rugby League competition begins this Saturday 1 April and Gerringong open their season with an away game at Berry. Gerringong is a beautiful coastal town about 130 kilometres south of Sydney. The local Rugby League club plays in the Group 7 competition of the NSW Country Rugby League and in first grade there are 11 teams. These are the Albion Park-Oak Flats Eagles, Berry-Shoalhaven Magpies, Jamberoo Superoos, Kiama Knights, Milton-Ulladulla Bulldogs, Nowra-Bomaderry Jets, Port Kembla Blacks, Shellharbour City Sharks, Shellharbour Stingrays, Warilla-Lake South Gorillas and the Gerringong Lions.

Gerringong is one of my favourite sporting teams. They have great local support, the coach does his job without receiving any payment, while the players also compete for no pay. Michael Cronin is the club's first grade coach and the 33 Test veteran begins his 12th season this year in charge of the Lions top side. In the last seven seasons, with magic Mick at the helm, Gerringong have won four Group 7 first grade Premierships, including the last two, in 2015 and 2016. Mick Cronin, now 65, is well known to fans throughout the world Rugby League community and indeed to Australian sports fans generally. He scored 309 Test points for Australia after first playing for his country from the Gerringong club in 1973. The result of the the 2016 Grand Final was Gerringong 10 (Joel Doosey 2 tries; Joel Roberts goal) beat Warilla/Lake South Gorillas 0. Gerringong's winning 17 man squad was Joel Roberts, Joel Doosey, Peter Cronin, Corey Mulhall, Taylor Hudson, Pat Cronin, Rixon Russell, Brad Davidson, Michael Brown, Peter Ford, Kal Collins, Nathan Ford, Tim Moore, Isaac Russell, Steve Evans, Jackson Ford, Lloyd Bowen. Michael Cronin joined Parramatta in 1977 and after eight seasons and 219 first grade games with the Parramatta Eels, he finished with 1,971 points and four Premiership winning Grand Finals. He made his first grade debut with Gerringong in April 1969 as a 17 year old centre and in eight seasons with the Lions, he scored 1,642 points. Awarded an OAM for his services to Rugby League in 1985. Michael was named as one of Australia's greatest 100 players in 2008. He is also in the Country Team of the Century and the Parramatta Team of the Century, plus the Group 7 team from the last 50 years. Just a few weeks ago he was honoured with Life Membership of the NSWRL. Michael, as coach, has shared four Premierships with his sons Peter, a centre and Patrick, five eighth, who were members of the four title winning sides since 2010. Both are talented footballers and have represented the South Coast, while Peter was good enough to play for St. George/Illawarra in a Charity Shield game against South Sydney in February 2011. Both Cronin boys have played over 100 first grade games with Gerringong and each have scored close to 50 first grade tries.

Continued on next page...

Continued from previous page...

Gerringong began in 1887 as an Aussie Rules club but changed to Rugby Union the next year. Up until 1914 when they moved to Rugby League, the club won six, first grade South Coast Rugby Union Premierships. They won the first grade title in their first year of Rugby League, 1914 and at the end of 2016, had won 19 first grade Premierships which is more than any other South Coast club. Over the years they have paid players and coaches but have not done this for the past 30 years or so. The club enjoys strong local support and home crowds can be around 2,000 at the Michael Cronin Oval when they play other leading teams. Led by club President Daryl Hobbs, Secretary Steve Hudson and Treasurer Bob Stewart, the club is in a sound financial position. The other hard working committee members are Dexter Freeme, Peter Jeffrey, John Quinn, Jeff Blackwood, Jan Brett, Ron Brett, David Cox, Mike Thomas, Geoff Ford and Ian Cross. Gerringong has its own two story club house at its home ground and recently secured DA approval for some extensions. This coming season they will also add a steak hut courtesy of one of the loyal sponsors.

As well as Michael Cronin, the club has produced two other Australian Test men. Winger Rod Wishart played 17 Test and prop Paul Quinn played seven Tests. The Sims brothers, Ashton, Tariq and Korbin, who grew up in Gerringong and played with the club, represented Fiji in World Cup games. There are a couple of other big name stars, such as Brett Morris (18 Tests), Josh Morris (6 Tests) and Shaun Timmins (9 Tests), who played some junior football with Gerringong.

The Toronto Wolfpack retained first place on the English Kingstone Press League 1 Table after their 48-21 win over the Keighley Cougars on Sunday. Winger Jonny Pownall collected three of the Wolfpack's nine tries.



Free Bus to Hamilton Vodafone Warriors Game!

I have chartered a bus that you can hitch a ride on free of charge. If you're keen email me your details at pcleitch@xtra.co.nz

Friday 19th May 2017

3pm - Depart The Falls Carpark, 22 Alderman Drive, Henderson

3:45pm - Depart Papatoetoe Train Station, Station Road, Papatoetoe (opposite Papatoetoe West School)

4.30pm - Depart Homai Train Station, Dalgety Drive Carpark (bus stop is inside the carpark), Manurewa

Arrival at Waikato Stadium by 6pm. Return after the match.

Sir Peter Leitch Lounge in Hamilton

**Vodafone Warriors
VS
St. George Illawarra Dragons**

Fri 19 May 2017 8:00pm

Be entertained by the one and only Sir Peter Leitch QSM, the 19th Vodafone Warrior. Located on level three of the Brian Perry Stand, the Sir Peter Leitch Lounge gives you the opportunity to enjoy pre and post-match hospitality with covered grandstand seating to take in the match. Your ticket includes a delicious carvery and drink on arrival along with access to your own private bar.

Package includes:

- Hosted by Sir Peter Leitch – the 19th Vodafone Warrior
- Exclusive access to the Sir Peter Leitch Lounge
- Covered grandstand seating
- Buffet style carvery
- Complimentary drink on arrival and cash bar facilities
- Special guests, post-match interviews and live entertainment

Get Your Tickets Now!

**Contact Glenn on 021918201
or email glenn@warriors.co.nz**

Warriors Perspective

By Miles Davis



IKNOW THERE is going to be a fair bit of pain and negativity in Vodafone Warriors land this week so I would like to give you some perspective on Sunday's game from the opposition camp which may slightly alleviate that pain.

Most weeks I am an ardent Vodafone Warriors fan apart from those days they play the St George Dragons who have been my love for over 3 decades. As soon as the whistle blows for kick-off I turn into as rabid and one-eyed Dragons fan as you could ever wish to meet. All of my great affection for the Vodafone Warriors players goes out of the window as I pray for them to be tackled or make a mistake. So the following assessment of the Vodafone Warriors performance is written without favourable bias.

The loss of Kieran Foran just before kick-off was a huge blow. Firstly for the player himself. One can only imagine how upset Foran was as his long-awaited comeback was scuttled at the last minute. Hopefully it will only be a short lay-off and not unduly affect his confidence. Secondly it would have been a blow to the Warriors plans and the mind-set of the team.

This was evident as the Dragons dominated the first 20 minutes and racked up an 18 point lead. Then a switch was seemingly flicked and the Warriors arguably had the better of the rest of the half. I can tell you that I was more than nervous during that final 20 minutes and felt the Vodafone Warriors were far the more likely team to score (which they did when Isaac Luke scrambled over close to the line).

The visitors momentum was kept up at the start of the 2nd half when Ken Maumalo scored in the corner, reducing the gap to 8 points. I can recall biting my nails and being on the edge of my seat several times during that 2nd spell as the Warriors kept pressing and even when Tim Lafai extended the Dragons lead to 14 points there were still those heart-attack moments when you feel your side is about to concede. The second half was a 6-6 all draw and although that was against a side holding a handy lead it should not be dismissed as irrelevant.

The main reason the Vodafone Warriors failed to win the game was their awful ball retention. The amount of spilled pill was far too much to allow them to build pressure and was always letting the Dragons off the hook.

Positives include the usual outstanding performance from record-breaker Simon Mannering. The huge impact of James Gavet from the bench who seemed to make big yards every time he had the ball. Shaun Johnson also started to show some of his magic but was too often let down by the sloppy hands of his team-mates. Roger Tuivasa-Sheck also showed signs of his best as he continues his comeback from injury.

The defeat is obviously a blow to Vodafone Warriors fans but from the opposition point of view I saw enough promise for them not to give up on their side just yet.



Let's Kick Cancer
in the Guts

Can your staff do 50 crunches in 5 minutes?

Challenge them to practice, then put themselves to the test in the **#LoveYerGuts** 50 in 5 Challenge Friday 5th May: to raise much-needed funds and awareness of gastro-intestinal cancers!

5,000 Gut Cancers each year and 50% will die within 5 years

Help us save lives, it could be you or someone you love!!

Go to www.loveyerguts.co.nz for more information and register

**Win great prizes worth over \$7,000,
whilst helping to save lives!**

Kurt Sorensen

By Miles Davis



Today the NRL is full of Kiwis plying their trade across the Tasman but 40 years ago they were somewhat of a rarity. One of the early pioneers that raised the profile of New Zealand league players in Australia was dynamic forward Kurt Sorensen. Not as tall or as big as many forwards of his day, Sorensen more than compensated with his pace and offload combined with a hard-hitting tackling style.

Whilst learning his trade at the Mt Wellington club he became the then youngest player to be selected for the Kiwis (18 years 323 days) and played in the 1975 World Cup (or World Series as it was also known).

In 1976 he set off to England for an overseas adventure and played a season for Wigan. It was a year that was to unfairly cost him in terms of his career. Wanting to join his brother Dane at Cronulla, he sat out a year in 1978 to avoid the ridiculous transfer fees that were applied to Kiwis wanting to play overseas. Despite sitting this period out he was barred from representing the Kiwis for 5 years which NZRL, among others, should hang their head in shame. On his return to the International scene he was part of the Kiwi side that won a famous victory against Australia at Lang Park.

In 1979 he finally linked up with Dane at Cronulla and quickly became a legend with his ability to break open opposition defences out wide. He had a nose for the try line managing 33 of them in his 132 games for the Sharks (in 2 spells, in between he had a season with Eastern Suburbs) and was the clubs top try-scorer in 1982. A player who enjoyed the extremely physical side of the game prevalent in those days, he particularly enjoyed his battles with Aussie hard-man Les Boyd (both in Australia and later in England where Boyd played for Warrington).

In 1985 he moved back to England and joined Widnes where he arguably became an even bigger legend than he had been at Cronulla. In an 8 year spell he played 252 games scoring 40 tries. At Widnes he was a teammate and mentor to the likes of Jonathan Davies and Martin Offiah (who coincidentally went to my school and played for the same rugby club in London as me, Rosslyn Park. But that's another story).

Sorensen enjoyed almost immediate success as Widnes won Premierships in 1987, '88 and '89 as well as back to back Championships in 1988 and '89 (2 of only 3 won by Widnes in their history).

In 1989 Widnes made the final of the Rugby League knockout trophy where they went down to Wigan but later that year he captained his side to a 30-18 victory in the World Club Challenge against a Canberra side that included Mal Meninga, Bradley Clyde, Ricky Stuart and Gary Belcher (and now super-coach Craig Bellamy on the bench).

In the 1991/92 season he was to taste success in the knockout trophy thrashing Leeds 24-0 in the final and bagging himself a try for good measure.

In an almost fairy-tale finish to his time at Widnes, Sorensen scored a try in the Challenge Cup final at Wembley in front of a crowd of almost 80,000. Unfortunately it was not enough as his side went down 20-14 to Wigan (for whom Frano Botica kicked 4 goals. Kiwis Dean Bell and Sam Panapa were also in the Wigan side).

After Widnes he joined Whitehaven as player/coach reviving their sagging fortunes but then controversially departed to bitter rivals Workington in 1995.

Today Sorensen lives on the Gold Coast and is involved in the construction industry, spending a lot of time in Western Australia at the mines. He is an advocate for an NRL club to be established in WA and is patron of Maori rugby league in Australia.

Continued on next page...

Continued from previous page...

Kurt Sorensen was as tough as nails in an era where video referees did not exist and no-one took a backward step. It was a privilege to watch him play as older fans in Sydney and the North of England will certainly attest.

1989 World Club Challenge – Widnes v Canberra <http://bit.ly/2nFJyZj>

1993 Challenge Cup Final – Widnes v Wigan <http://bit.ly/2nt-FydT>

1989 Championship decider Widnes v Wigan <http://bit.ly/2nadg4O>

Snippet of Kurt Sorensen interview <http://bit.ly/2mKd3d5>

(Bonus track. At beginning of above clip you see a man with Kurt, Jim Mills. He is the infamous chap who stomped on John Greengrass's head. Here is the footage of it just for those of you who have heard about it but never seen it. Not for the faint-hearted.) <http://bit.ly/2os4nVd>



Kurt Sorensen. Australia and New Zealand Legends of League Christchurch Earthquake Appeal Match, Mt Smart Stadium. 10 March 2011. www.photosport.nz

Get movie deals any day of the week



Thanks to Vodafone Fantastic Fridays

Visit vodafone.co.nz/movies

Vodafone
Power to you



Eligible customers only. Not available to business customers. \$2.50 admin fee applies. Full terms go to vodafone.co.nz/movies. One 2 for 1 Movie Voucher offer per person, per week.

WIN A SIGNED VODAFONE WARRIORS JERSEY

Purchase any CCC Warriors product this month & be in to win a signed Warriors Heritage Jersey.



SHOP NOW
CLICK HERE





By John Deaker

A Tale Of Contrasting Cricket Series and Captains

Kane Williamson on Day 3 of the 3rd test match between New Zealand Black Caps and South Africa. Photo www.photosport.nz

THIS WEEK sees the conclusion of two cricket series that have differed markedly in all sorts of ways but probably most notably in the spirit and respect that both teams have shown towards each other.

The India v Australia series has been compulsive viewing at times because two evenly matched teams (also ranked 1 and 2 in the world) that hate each other have been willing to test the limits of what the ICC will allow from players on-field behaviour as they've fought tooth and nail to gain the upper-hand. Cricket is Australia's National sport while it's more a religion in India. The pressure and what the series means to both nations has often been reflected by the controversial actions of the two teams' respective leaders, Virat Kohli and Steve Smith.

South Africa and New Zealand's current series between the 3rd and 5th ranked test nations has been totally different. They haven't lacked in the quality cricket they've produced though the absence of world-class players like Dale Steyn, AB De Villiers, Ross Taylor and Trent Boult for at least some of the test series has meant neither team has been at their very best. Both teams have played some really tough cricket at times but never has there been even a glimpse of the hatred and desperation that we've seen in the Indian series.

Rugby is the sport that South Africans and New Zealanders are more passionate about than cricket but it's hard to look past the respective leaders of both teams as being even more responsible for the good cricketing spirit that this series has had that's so different from the Indian series. When very different personalities were in charge of the teams, Stephen Fleming and Graeme Smith's teams followed the lead of their captains and were much more prepared to indulge in the types of unsportsmanlike conduct that Kohli and Smith's teams have shown in their pursuit of victory.

Kane Williamson is renowned as a leader that would rather do his talking with the bat than get involved in any verbal or psychological warfare. AB De Villiers departed from his team after the ODI series but Faf du Plessis seems to stand for similar sorts of values to De Villiers who is one of the most respected players in international cricket.

It's been extremely entertaining to see the Australians and Indians test the limits of the umpires and the ICC but it's not the type of behaviour that most New Zealand cricket fans would like to see from their own team. New Zealand is unlikely to ever reach number 1 in the world of cricket but at least in Kane Williamson we have a player that churns out a similar amount of runs with the bat to Kohli and Smith but is also leading our team in a manner that we can be very proud of.

STATE OF ORIGIN 2017

GAME 1
31 MAY 2017



STATE OF ORIGIN 2017 GAME 1

Witness the passion on display as super-star teammates go to head-to-head during Game 1 of the 2017 State of Origin Series in Brisbane. It's mate vs mate, with pride on the line for both teams.

Whether you support blue or maroon, you'll enjoy the banter on our two-night Brisbane tour with host Monty Betham.

TWIN SHARE

Land Only **\$1,295** per person

Flights Incl from **\$2,395** per person

WHAT'S INCLUDED:

- 2 nights accommodation at the Hilton Brisbane (Tuesday 30 May to Thursday 1 June)
- Daily buffet breakfast
- Official ticket to State of Origin Game 1 at Suncorp Stadium, Brisbane (Wednesday 31 May)
- Welcome function
- Tour hosted by Monty Betham
- The services of Global Sports & Events staff throughout

FLIGHT INCLUSIVE PACKAGE ALSO INCLUDES:

- Return economy Air New Zealand flight from Auckland (Departs Tuesday 30 May and arrives back Thursday 1 June).
- Group airport transfers

SINGLE TRAVELLERS

Land Only **\$1,695** per person

Flights Incl from **\$2,795** per person



Auckland Rugby League Sharman Cup Premiership Underway For 2017

By Talei Anderson

Photo: Talei Anderson - Rd 1 Sharman Cup Pakuranga v Otara at Ti Rakau Park

THE AUCKLAND Rugby League season is officially underway with the opening round of the Sharman Cup kicking off on Saturday March 25.

Following a comprehensive and consultative review undertaken in 2016, the Sharman Cup competition has started two weeks earlier than the SAS Fox Memorial with the grand final of the Sharman Plate on Saturday August 26 and the grand final of the Sharman Cup Premiership on Saturday September 2 (the same grand final date scheduled for the Fox Memorial and Women's competition).

This season, the Sharman Cup will follow a two section, one round qualification series based on final team placings from 2016. At the conclusion of the qualification series, the top four teams in each section will qualify for the Sharman Cup Premiership, while the bottom three teams in section one and the bottom two teams in section two will qualify for the Sharman Cup Plate.

"Despite the earlier start to the season, clubs are enthusiastic with getting the season underway," says ARL's football manager, Pat Carthy.

"It's a performance based competition and the new format puts everyone on the same starting line."

Otara had a great start to their 2017 campaign with a 40-20 win over Pakuranga at Ti Rakau Park. Bay Roskill -who advanced to the Sharman Cup grand final in 2016- claimed their first win over New Lynn 36-26 at home. Hibiscus Coast -a crowd favourite after their successful stint at the ARL Nines this year- were unable to pull one over East Coast Bays going down 18-26. It was an unsuccessful start to the season for the hosting teams in section two, with Papatoetoe going down 4-18 to Manurewa and Waitemata

falling 24-34 to Ponsonby.

Otahuhu, Ellerslie and Manukau will have their first hit out in the competition this season after having a bye round last weekend. Otahuhu will play their first game ever in the Sharman Cup division against East Coast Bays at Bert Henham Park, Ellerslie travel out south to play the Marlins, and Manukau will play the Seagulls at Ranui Domain.

All other grades but the Fox Memorial kick-off this Saturday April 1, with the Women's competition commencing on Sunday April 2. The opening round of the SAS Fox Memorial kicks off next weekend on Saturday April 8.

ARL Sharman Cup results for Saturday March 25: Round 1

Qualification Series: Section 1

Hibiscus Coast 18 East Coast Bays 26

Pakuranga 20 Otara 40

Bay Roskill 36 New Lynn 26

Otahuhu bye

Qualification Series: Section 2

Papatoetoe 4 Manurewa 18

Waitemata 24 Ponsonby 34

Ellerslie bye

Manukau bye

Sharman Cup Rd 2 Fixtures

Qualification Series: Section 1

Bay Roskill v Pakuranga @ Ti Rakau Park 2.30pm

Otara v Hibiscus Coast @ Ngati Otara 2.30pm

Otahuhu v East Coast Bays @ Bert Henham 2.30pm

New Lynn bye

Qualification Series: Section 2

Waitemata v Manukau @ Ranui Domain 2.30pm

Manurewa v Ellerslie @ Mountfort Park 2.30pm

Ponsonby bye

Papatoetoe bye

Footy Clinic Holiday Programme



THE VODAFONE Warriors are committed to promoting rugby league to different audiences and making the great game readily accessible to as many people as possible. Through their Footy Clinic programme they provide a unique experience for kids to engage with the club. This gives young children a behind-the-scenes, up-close engagement to introduce them to or to enhance their connection to/with the club.

Features include a 'Day in the life of a Vodafone Warrior' experience which puts the participants in the place of the players. They see footage of the club's NRL stars training, playing conditioning games and being put through fitness drills which the kids taking part in the Footy Clinic then do themselves. There are also interviews with NRL players, club ambassadors Jerome Ropati and Georgia Hale, kids and parents. It's a full-on action-packed programme tailored for energetic boys and girls looking for holiday activities.

Clinic dates for April Holidays

- Tuesday, 18 April (age 10-12)
- Wednesday, 19 April (age 10-12)
- Thursday, 20 April (age 9-11)
- Friday, 21 April (age 9-11)
- Thursday, 27 April (age 7-9)
- Friday, 28 April (age 7-9)

Each Clinic will be \$99 per child, otherwise parents can book children in for all three clinics for \$199. The dates for the July and October School holidays are TBC as we will work around players schedule.

To register for Footy Clinic please email community@warriors.kiwi.



When we were in Dunedin I gate crashed former All Black Paul Miller's wedding photos. For a laugh of course.

Pasifika Festival attracts thousands to Western Springs

By Harley Wall - Rugby League World Cup – Community Engagement

AUCKLAND'S PASIFIKA Festival was held on March 25 & 26 at Western Springs Park in Auckland. It was the 25th year the event has been held, celebrating and showcasing Pacific island culture. This year's event was the biggest yet, with eleven stages of entertainment – each stage representing a different Pacific island nation. These stages were: Samoa, Tonga, Fiji, Aotearoa, Cook Islands, Niue, Tuvalu, Tokelau, Kiribati, Tahiti and Hawaii.

There were outstanding performances right across both days witnessed by the 60,000 plus spectators who turned up to the event, despite the damp weather on both days. The event was free entry, and has now grown to become the largest Pacific Island cultural festival of its kind in the world. There were endless options of food at each hub – the smell was intoxicating! The event also promotes Pacific trade and business, with a number of businesses on-site promoting their products supported by government departments and commercial sponsors.

Our Rugby League World Cup team had a stall inside the Samoan Hub, with the opportunity for contestants to win a family pass to Samoa v Tonga RLWC match in Hamilton on Saturday 4 November. Congratulations to Dane Autufuga from Auckland who won the family pass to the match! The event was the perfect opportunity for us to promote the Samoa and Tonga fixtures within the Pacific Island community, especially with both nations having two matches here in New Zealand during the tournament. Tickets for the Rugby League World Cup for all seven games in NZ are on sale now from RLWC2017.com. Tickets start from \$10 for children, \$20 for adults and \$45 for a family of four.



David Higgins from Duco with John Key

At an Evening with Sir Richard Branson



It was a privilege to meet paralympic gold medallist Liam Malone.



Myself with Sir Richard Branson.



Me and my mate John Key.



With One News presenter Peter Williams.

MAD BUTCHER SPECIAL

GET YOUR *BIG LEAGUE* DIGITAL SUBSCRIPTION

AVAILABLE ON TABLETS
AND NOW ON SMARTPHONES!



SAVE
81%

ONLY \$29.99

THIS INCLUDES 32 ISSUES ACROSS 12 MONTHS

So if you sign up now you will get the remainder of the 2017 season and the start of the 2018 season too!

Visit: magsonline.com.au/big-leagueNZ2017

Big League digital edition is available on all iOS6 and greater compatible devices including iPhones and android devices including tablets and smartphones. 12 month subscription includes Rounds 1-26, Final Series including bumper Grand Final souvenir edition and the Season Review. Print magazine only available to purchase at Warriors home games in New Zealand.

If there's one thing we know about Simon Mannering, it's that he can be counted

A GAINST all the odds, Simon Mannering has become the ultimate Warrior. Last week against the Dragons he eclipsed Stacey Jones' record of 261 NRL games and he is now on course to become the first to play 300 matches for the Auckland club. He's been a first-grader for 13 seasons and would have even more matches under his belt, if not for the team's renowned ability to find new strange ways to miss the finals each year.

It's an unlikely tale, given Mannering's background. He grew up in Motueka, a small town (population 7,000) at the top of the South Island, where league is barely played. It's a world away from the sport's power base in Auckland and also isolated from traditional South Island league strongholds like Christchurch and the West Coast.

Mannering was bred on rugby and soon progressed as a hard-running

centre in the 1st XV at nearby Nelson College. He didn't have his first game of league until he was 17, after being roped into a scratch team for a national secondary schools tournament in late 2003. After just a handful of games he moved to Wellington to play in the national senior club competition, and within six months was in the Warriors system. By 2005 he'd made his NRL debut and a year later, he was turning out for his nation against the Kangaroos.

"In a lot of ways Simon broke the mould," says former Warrior Micheal Luck. "He wasn't a stereotypical Warriors forward, like a Logan Swann, an Aven Guttenbeil, an Ali Laititi or a Jerry Seuseu. He was a skinny white kid from the South Island who no one knew much about. I'm sure some people were wondering where he'd come from but it didn't take long for people to be impressed."

Luck met Mannering on his second day at Mt Smart and the two bonded almost immediately, mostly over their taste in music.

"We had a simple lifestyle away from

football — not too fussed about things," says Luck. "Most Fridays and Saturdays you could find us having a couple of beers at home, with AD/DC on the CD player. We were young guys on a budget and that was our entertainment."

They also shared a similar mentality about their football, centred around getting the job done and not making excuses.

"Simon was pretty unique from early on," says Luck. "Most young guys who come into grade have an up-and-down trajectory. They'll play well for a couple of games and then go flat. Simon never had that — and boy, he was tough."

MADE OF STEEL

Mannering is a living legend around Mt Smart, and if the Warriors ever commission stadium statues Mannering and Jones will surely be top of the list. For many associated with the club, a match on July 15, 2007 started the Mannering legacy.

Mannering starred in a 44-16 win over the Dragons — scoring two tries — but the 20-year-old had no right to even be on the field.

"He hadn't trained all week and was pretty crook," recalls Luck. "I remember [coach] Ivan Cleary pulling me aside and saying 'Junior's lost five or six kilos — I don't think he's a chance'. But he turned up on the day,

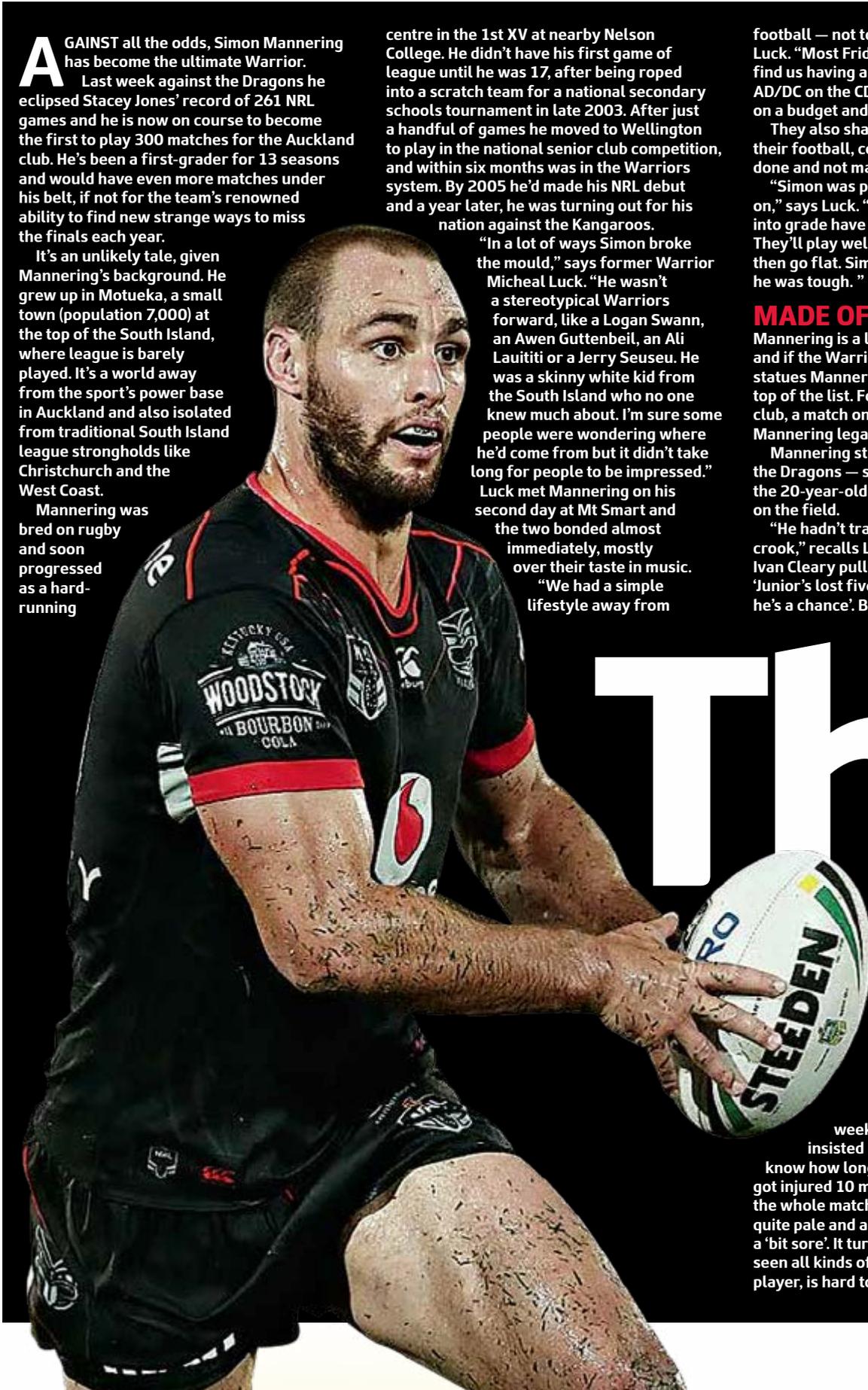
The

got changed, went out there and got man of the match. Then he came off the field, didn't even warm down and drove off in the Kingswood."

Long-time Warriors doctor John Mayhew recalls the episode vividly.

"He had food poisoning all week," Mayhew says. "Simon insisted he was OK but we didn't

know how long he'd last. Jerome Ropati got injured 10 minutes in and he had to play the whole match. After the game, he looked quite pale and also mentioned his hand was a 'bit sore'. It turned out it was broken. I've seen all kinds of things but that, from a young player, is hard to forget."



on. By **MICHAEL BURGESS**

Mayhew has a catalogue of similar tales, and compares Mannering to renowned All Blacks hardman Wayne 'Buck' Sheldford and former Kiwi Ruben Wiki.

"He's one of the toughest players I've worked with," says Mayhew. "He doesn't take crazy risks but he's able to take the field in situations that others couldn't comprehend. He's played with minor fractures, dislocated joints [and] illnesses. It's always about the team and that's why he's so respected."

Luck estimates that Mannering has taken the field around 100 times in "far less than optimal physical condition".

"It's an attitude thing," said Luck. "A lot of young players these days find a reason why not. Simon always finds a way."

LEAVING A LEGACY

Mannering has left an indelible imprint on New Zealand league. While he hasn't been able to bring a premiership to this country, he was at the forefront of several successful Warriors campaigns between 2007 and 2011, with four finals appearances that culminated in a grand final. There have been 217 players turn out for the Warriors since 1995 and Mannering has played with almost 60 per cent of them. There was also the Kiwis' 2008 World Cup triumph, the 2010 Four Nations win and the historic three-peat over the Kangaroos in 2014-15.

Significantly, he's also missed the past four trans-tasman tests, when the Kiwis haven't come close to beating Australia.

"He's No.1 for me," says team-mate Ben Matulino. "I've always said it when people ask me 'who would be the first person you would pick'. Most people expect to hear Shaun [Johnson] or Johnathan Thurston but it would be Simon, every time."

Mannering is famously humble, and always reticent to discuss personal achievement, but he admits this one is a bit special.

"Being up there with Stacey [Jones] is something that I am proud of," said Mannering. "Achieving that mark is something, especially as I never imagined as a kid that I would play even one NRL game, let alone this many. But good team performances stick in the mind more than milestones... more than anything I'd love to bring more success to this club."

Mr Consistency

Position	Games	Tries
Centre	58	16
Lock	50	9
Second Row	149	33
Wing	1	0
Total	262	58

NRL career

Games	262
Avg mins	76
Avg runs	10.8
Avg metres	89
Avg tackles	29.9
Missed tackles (p/g)	1.4
Effective tackles	90.7%

Warrior



DATE: SUNDAY, APRIL 2
VENUE: MT SMART STADIUM
KICK-OFF: 4PM (NZ)
REFEREE: ADAM GEE
ASSISTANT REFEREE: GAVIN REYNOLDS
TOUCH JUDGES: JEFF YOUNIS & ANTHONY ELLIOT
SENIOR REVIEW OFFICIAL: JARED MAXWELL
REVIEW OFFICIAL: LUKE PATTEN
FOX SPORTS: LIVE 1PM (AEST)
LIVE RADIO: ABC, 2GB

#NRLWarriorsTitans					P	T	G	PTS			
3	0	0	0	Roger TUIVASA-SHECK (C)	1	Tyrone ROBERTS	4	2	0	8	
1	1	0	4	Blake AYSHFORD	2	Tyronne ROBERTS-DAVIS	3	2	0	8	
4	3	0	12	David FUSITU'A	3	Dale COPLEY	1	2	0	8	
4	1	0	4	Solomone KATA	4	Konrad HURRELL	4	2	0	8	
4	1	0	4	Ken MAUMALO	5	Daniel VIDOT	1	1	0	4	
0	0	0	0	Kieran FORAN	6	Kane ELGEY	4	2	0	8	
4	2	7	22	Shaun JOHNSON	7	Ash TAYLOR	4	0	14	28	
4	0	0	0	Charlie GUBB	8	Jarrod WALLACE	4	0	0	0	
4	1	1	6	Issac LUKE	9	Ryan SIMPKINS	2	0	0	0	
4	0	0	0	Jacob LILLYMAN	10	Ryan JAMES (C)	4	0	0	0	
4	1	0	4	Bodene THOMPSON	11	Kevin PROCTOR (C)	4	0	0	0	
4	1	0	4	Ryan HOFFMAN	12	Chris McQUEEN	4	1	0	4	
4	0	0	0	Simon MANNERING	13	Leivaha PULU	4	0	0	0	
INTERCHANGE											
0	0	0	0	Nathaniel ROACHE	14	Karl LAWTON	3	1	0	4	
1	0	0	0	James GAVET	15	Nathaniel PETERU	3	0	0	0	
4	0	0	0	Sam LISONE	16	Chris GREVSMUHL	0	0	0	0	
1	0	0	0	Ligi SAO	17	Joe GREENWOOD	4	1	0	4	
RESERVES											
3	0	0	0	Albert VETE	18	Max KING	2	0	0	0	
4	0	0	0	Bunty AFOA	20/19	Paterika VAIVAI	0	0	0	0	
3	0	0	0	Mafoa'aeata HINGANO	21/20	Anthony DON	2	1	0	4	
0	0	0	0	Mason LINO	22/21	Tyler CORNISH	1	1	0	4	
COACHES											
Stephen KEARNEY						Neil HENRY					

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	TITANS
Position (Points)	14th (2)	12th (2)
Points For	60	96
Points Against	98	112

ATTACK		
Tries	11	17
Completions	75%	77%
Tries 0-20m	9	13
Tries 21-50m	2	2
Tries 51-100m	0	2

DEFENCE		
Tries	16	19
Tries 0-20m	7	13
Tries 21-50m	8	5
Tries 51-100m	1	1

MATCH AVERAGES		
Tries Scored	3	4
Tries Conceded	4	5
Points Scored	15	24
Points Conceded	25	28
Hit Ups/Runs	173	159
Tackles	318	274
Metres Gained	1542	1323
Handling Errors	5	3
Offloads	6	10
Line-breaks	4	4
Goalkicking	67%	74%

HEAD-TO-HEAD
 Played 20, Warriors 13, Gold Coast 7

AT MT SMART STADIUM
 Played 9, Warriors 6, Gold Coast 3

WINNING FORM 2017
WARRIORS: WLLL Streak – 3 losses
GOLD COAST: LLWL Streak – 1 loss

PAST 8 CLASHES
2016 – WARRIORS D. GOLD COAST 24-14 at Cbus Super Stadium; **WARRIORS D. GOLD COAST 27-18** at Mt Smart Stadium
2015 – WARRIORS D. GOLD COAST 36-14 at Cbus Super Stadium; **GOLD COAST D. WARRIORS 32-28** at Mt Smart Stadium
2014 – WARRIORS D. GOLD COAST 42-0 at Mt Smart Stadium; **WARRIORS D. GOLD COAST 24-16** at Cbus Super Stadium
2013 – WARRIORS D. GOLD COAST 24-22 at Skilled Park; **WARRIORS D. GOLD COAST 25-24** at Mt Smart Stadium

BIGGEST HEAD-TO-HEAD WINS
WARRIORS D. GOLD COAST 42-0 at Mt Smart Stadium, 2014
GOLD COAST D. WARRIORS 30-10 at Mt Smart Stadium, 2009

NEXT CLASH
WARRIORS: v Parramatta at Mt Smart, 4pm Sunday April 9
GOLD COAST: v Canberra at Cbus Super, 5.30pm Saturday April 8

CASUALTY WARD
WARRIORS: Ben Matulino (knee) – indefinite
GOLD COAST: Pat Politoni (arm) – Rd 7; Nathan Peats (shoulder), Jarryd Hayne (ankle) – Rd 8; Agnatus Paasi (shoulder), Will Zillman (calf), Dan Sarginson (knee), John Olive (pectoral), Morgan Boyle (concussion), Ben Nakubuwai (knee) – indefinite

50 BIG LEAGUE 2017 Round Five

Courtesy of our friends at Big League Magazine

NRL Preview

by **DAVID MIDDLETON**
@Middleton_David

Gutsy Titans take aim at nemesis

TYRONE ROBERTS

2
try assists
in Round 4



Mt Smart Stadium Sunday, 4pm

Form: After claiming a first-up victory over Newcastle, the Warriors' next three performances have thrown up similarities. In losses to the Storm, Bulldogs and Dragons, the Warriors have scored two tries while conceding four. The Titans have played admirably despite three losses from four games but they will need to shake off a tendency for slow starts. They have failed to score a try in the opening 20 minutes of their games while conceding six.

History: Over the past six seasons, the Warriors have lost to the Titans only once. Last year the Warriors won 27-18 at Mt Smart and 24-14 at Cbus Super Stadium. Overall, the Warriors have a 65 per cent winning record over the Queensland outfit (13 wins to seven).

Danger sign: The Titans are the most dangerous team in the competition when it comes to scoring tries from kicks. Already halfback Ash Taylor has produced seven kicks that have ended in four points, while five-eighth Kane Elgey has contributed one. The Warriors have already conceded four tries from kicks and their big outside backs will need to be able to turn and recover quickly to hold the Titans out.

Best Bet? Look for the Titans to improve on a dismal recent record against the Warriors and claim victory by 1-12 points.

Money-spinner: Players to consider for First Tryscorer include Ken Maumalo, David Fusitu'a and Konrad Hurrell.



HOLDEN CUP

DATE: SUNDAY, APRIL 2 **VENUE:** MT SMART STADIUM **KICK-OFF:** 11.45AM (NZ)
REFEREE: JARROD COLE **ASSISTANT REFEREE:** DREW OULTRAM
TOUCH JUDGES: SHANE REHM & NATHAN BARKER-PRINGLE **FOX SPORTS:** 9.45AM (AEST)

WARRIORS V TITANS

Lee TURNER	1	Tre WILLIAMS
Lewis SOOSEMEEA	2	Jordan BIRCH
Melino FINEANGANOFU	3	Phillip SAMI
Kane TELEA	4	Daniel BROWNBILL
Edward VAEAU-MULITALO	5	Curtis DANSEY-SMALLER
Chanel HARRIS-TAVITA	6	Ethan ROBERTS (C)
Dylan TAVITA	7	Alexander BRIMSON
Kenese KENESE (C)	8	Moeaki FOTUAIKA
Erin CLARK	9	Corey MANICAROS
Soane HUFANGA	10	Justin FAI
Joe VUNA	11	Rory LILLIS
Isaiah PAPALI'I	12	Apiata NOEMA (C)
Chris SIO	13	Reihana MARSH
14 Keanu LAUMATIA-PAKI	14	Bostyn HAKARAIA, 15 Kobe TARARO, 16 Keenan YORSTON
15 Tyler SLADE, 16 Jerome MAMEA, 17 Nathan NEWTON	17	Blake LENEHAN
18 Preston RIKI, 20 Gibson POPALII, 21 Shane HANNAM	18	Tyronne ROBERTS-DAVIS
22 Eiden ACKLAND, 23 Tayhler PAORA, 24 Mathew FAITOTOA	19	Jake SPAREY, 20 Tye BARRY
	21	Max KING, 22 Luke POLSON
	23	Xavier JOHANSSON
Grant POCKLINGTON		Ben WOOLF

WAIT FOR IT... The Warriors are still gunning for their first win of the season, but there is some great talent in this improving side and that was on display against the Dragons. Centre Melino Fineanganofu scored a double giving the team some hope, but better goal-kicking by Kane Telea will be needed if the Warriors want to gain an edge.

ON HOLD... The Titans v Cowboys match was not played last Saturday due to logistical issues and has been postponed to a later date. Judging from their recent performances however, the Titans' biggest flaw is their defence. They matched the Eels for one half in their Round 3 clash but fell away after the break, finishing the night with 45 missed tackles.

— KAMILIA HANNA

HEAD-TO-HEAD LEADERS

AVERAGE METRES	AVERAGE TACKLES	LINE-BREAKS
Roger Tuivasa-Sheck 163	Ryan James 38	Shaun Johnson 3
Jacob Lillyman 155	Simon Mannering 38	David Fusitu'a 3
Ken Maumalo 150	Jarrold Wallace 38	Chris McQueen 2
Dan Sarginson 146	Bunty Afoa 34	Tyrone Roberts 2
Ryan James 133	Bodene Thompson 30	Dale Copley 2

STATS

NRL FANTASY

FANTASY POINTS
Shaun Johnson 61.3
Dale Copley 51.0
Simon Mannering 50.5
Ryan James 49.0
Jarrold Wallace 48.3

PHOTO: Richard Gosling

Reader Mail



Hi Sir Pete

MYSELF AND the family always go watch the Warriors Intra Super Cup when they play in Sydney and the last 2 weekends they have been here, so off we went. They beat the Steelers on the weekend through strong defence and belief. We were the only Warriors supporters there out of about 200 people. After the game Isaiah Papali'i gave my Son his headgear and Ruben came over for a chat. Each player thanked us for coming out in the pouring rain to support. They are a great team with a fantastic attitude.

Cheers Matt

Celebrating Simon Mannering's 262nd Game!

Simon now holds the record for greatest number of games played for the Vodafone Warriors



Simon and Stacey Jones, who held the previous record for 261 games played for the Warriors.



The Vodafone Warriors celebrating Simon's achievement.

NO ADVERTS ARE PAID FOR IN THIS NEWSLETTER

If you wish to **subscribe** to the newsletter go to:
www.sirpeterleitch.co.nz

Our Sponsors

A VERY BIG THANK YOU TO ALL OUR SUPPORTING BRANDS!

Without the help of these brands the Sir Peter Leitch Club and Newsletter wouldn't be as fantastic as it is. If you do get the opportunity please support them whenever you can.



The Newsletter Team

Here is the team that help me put together the newsletter each week. We have a number of fantastic contributors who send in content each week that along with my editorial gets wrapped up by our graphic designer and sent out by our distribution man to your inbox.

Sir Peter Leitch - Editor
David Kemeys - Editor at Large
Hayden Woodhead - Graphic Designer
Stephan Maier - Distribution

John Deaker - Correspondent
John Coffey - Southern Correspondent
Barry Ross - Australian Correspondent
Ben Francis - Northern Correspondent
John Holloway - Correspondent
Miles Davis - Correspondent
Shane Hurndell - Correspondent