

VODAFONE



Sir Peter Leitch Club

AT MT SMART STADIUM, HOME OF THE MIGHTY VODAFONE WARRIORS

Newsletter

31st May 2017

#172



Vodafone Warriors Triumph Over Broncos at Home!



Charnze Nicoll-Klokstad dives for the try line.



Ken Maumalo pushes aside Travis Waddell.



Nathaniel Roache on the run.

Photos courtesy of www.photosport.nz



Albert Vete pre-game.



Bunty Afoa warming up.



Canterbury Clubhouse winners.



Drums of the Pacific dancers.



Father and son travelled from Brisbane to attend the game.



Solomone Kata sitting with Kurt and Kelsey.



Vocal fan in the south stand.



Mt Smart Joker.

In the Stacey Jones Lounge



Brendan Popplewell from the TAB presents Glen Reid with the TAB bet of David Fusitu'a for first try scorer.



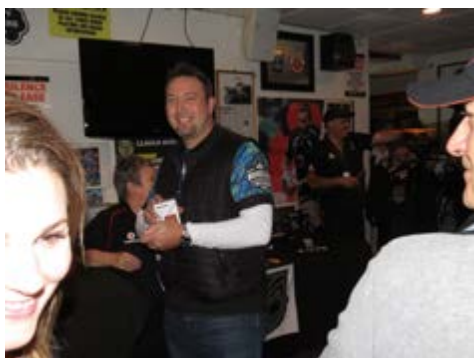
Cathy Jones from Waiiau talks to the Butcher about the affect the earthquakes have had on her and her partner.



David Fusitu'a and Isaac Luke came up to the lounge to chat with the members.



George Mann ex Kiwi (played 9 test) and Togan player talks with Butch, his old mate from his Mangere East Hawks Days.



Nathan Taale wins a Panasonic portable radio.



Joe Harwood coach of Wairarapa Bush Rugby.



Richie Barnett ex Kiwi captain and selector talk to Sir Peter.



Sir Peter interviews Kiwis coach David Kidwell.



Paula Smith from Waiiau talks about the affect the earthquakes have had on her.

Vodafone Warriors v Parramatta Eels THIS Friday NIGHT AT ANZ Stadium in Sydney

Kick off 9.50PM
NZ Time



In the Stacey Jones Lounge



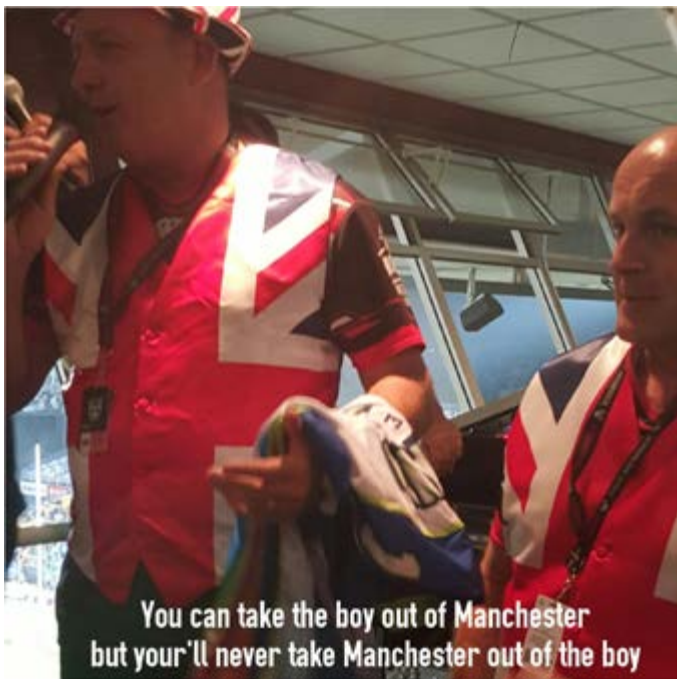
Sue Whitehead is donating the signed 9's jersey to the Manchester bombing fundraiser.



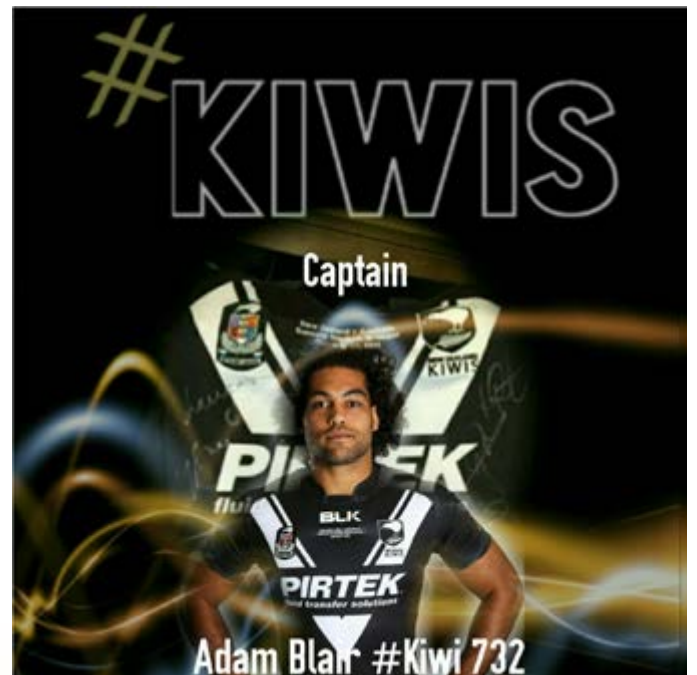
the POMS Peter Taylor, Neil Saxton, Lee Whitehead, Adam Worth with back up from Pete the DJ in fine voice.



Stephen White and son David from Waiheke Island Winery Stoneyridge..



Pictures by Joyce Putohe



A Win And I'll Take It!

By David Kemeys

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



TALK ABOUT being on a hiding to nothing. If we lost to a Brisbane outfit devoid of half a dozen first team players, all out on Origin duty, the haters would have a field day.

Win, and it was only a victory over a Brisbane outfit devoid of half a dozen first team players, all out on Origin duty, and the haters will have a field day anyway.

Luckily it was the later, and I for one do not care. You beat who is in front of you – end of.

Hardly surprisingly coach Stephen Kearney was a relieved man after a decent crowd of 13,800 turned up at Mt Smart to see us get a 28-10 win.

Our last two outings were the thin part of Pete's often quoted "through thick and thin" support - in fact they were not so much thin as anorexic.

So I loved seeing us play with more pride.

We were certainly more enthusiastic than against the Panthers and Dragons.

Kearney said we needed to get back to what worked, and he rolled the dice big time, sticking with much the same line-up that had dished up the marshmallow defensive efforts in the two previous games.

The coach has had a horrible time of it since taking charge, and there were plenty of people calling for wholesale changes, but he stayed loyal – though he'd probably prefer to call it calm.

The problem for Kearney is he virtually had to stay loyal. Who was he going to bring in?

But this performance will at least buy him some time to keep plugging away at making his charges are more consistent side.

"We lost our way in terms of concentration and focus on what's important for us. There's just no let up, and as soon as you take your eye off the ball you get a really good kick up the backside."

He's not wrong.

Our first half in particular was good, three of the most criticised players - Blake Ayshford, Shaun Johnson and Roger Tuivasa-Sheck – all crossing for tries.

RTS especially was outstanding. He was determined in returning the ball, he was vocal in organising his troops and he was brave under any pressure – though to be fair there was not that much of it – Brisbane could mount.

Even given our woeful recent displays it was hard to find anyone at the break who expressed anything other than confidence.

It was more that the side we were watching was nothing like the one we had seen previously.

When Ken Maumalo scored after the break it was done as a contest, James Gavet icing the cake late on when there were a few nerves in the stadium.

Take a bow though James Roberts, who had a horror with his hands early on, but got a brace for the Broncos and never stopped trying. We could learn a thing or two from his willingness to put his body on the line, and to try things.

Yes Darius Boyd, Corey Oates, Anthony Milford, Matt Gillett, Josh McGuire and Sam Thaiday were all out, and I am one of those who believe any side stripped of six starters is going to find it harder than usual, but I repeat. I don't care. It feels good to win.

Bennett Is Right

Quite apart from the fact I think Broncos coach Wayne Bennett is some sort of league mastermind, he impressed even more, even though I expected it, when he refused to blame his side's poor showing on the Origin.

He's never struck me as a bloke who reaches for excuses.

But he must have been horrified by what he witnessed, 16 errors, 46 missed tackles and only a 55 percent completion rate.

"We've been in this situation for 31 years. No one has provided more players than the Broncos to State of Origin. No one knows the impact it has on the club better than I do. But we've never used it as an excuse and we're not now."

And nice to see him give some praise to former Kiwis skipper Benji Marshall, who tried all night in his debut for the club.

"I thought he had a really good game for us. He was one of our better players and he defended well, made good decisions with the football, and competed."

Words Of Wisdom?

From the "I am not sure he should have said that" camp comes Kieran Foran.

Despite horrible showings against the Panthers and Dragons, Kieran was in the media ahead of the Broncos game saying his side was not done yet.

"We're fully aware of the challenge ahead. More than ever, we're on top of the ball - we know we need to take our game to another level."

Okey dokey.

He was going to look like a complete dickhead if we lost after saying that, but luckily instead he looks like a genius.

Only the most optimistic person believes this win is proof we will finally end five straight years without finals football.

But State of Origin time has always seen us do well, with a lot of sides - particularly the Queensland-based ones - depleted.

Brisbane arrived with six out, and hands up anyone who thinks that did not have a major bearing on the game. Thought not.

Mannering Makes Us Matter

Great to see Simon Mannering back. We were lost without him.

He was in the papers at the weekend talking about how tough watching us struggle is.

"It's a lot harder watching than playing and I get much more nervous."

What a shame it is that Simon has only played finals footy four times in his 12 years with us.

It feels like he deserves better, and I believe he would walk into any NRL team to this day.

His loyalty is unquestioned.

"You learn a lot more from the hard times than the good."

And how typical is it of the man that he had this to say about our recent performances.

"I don't think I would have made much difference."

I don't agree, and you could see how much better we were on Saturday night for having him on the field.

TRAIN RIDES



Miniature steam, diesel and electric trains
11am to 4pm daily

Queens Birthday weekend — 3-5 June 2017
Manukau Live Steamers Track is situated at
Centre Park, Robertson Road, Mangere.

RIDES COST JUST \$2.00 PP
CONCESSION TICKETS AVAILABLE
6 RIDES FOR \$10.00

Great News If It Is Right

News from league writer Michael Burgess, who I believe is pretty good, that we are targeting Bulldogs skipper James Graham and Broncos forward Adam Blair, of course just named Kiwis captain by coach David Kidwell on Sunday.

I would snap your hand off to take Graham, and the Bulldogs are thought to be under a bit of salary cap pressure, and Blair would not be a bad addition either.

Both are getting on a bit, but there is no substitute for experience.

Anyone recall the twin signings of Steve Price and Ruben Wiki.

That did not turnout too bad.

Burgess reports negotiations are well advanced with Blair, who is a close friend of Stephen Kearney.

Graham has a year left on his deal but could move to secure a longer deal for his last contract.

I say "if it is right", because at the same time this was being reported, David Long at Stuff was reporting Blair is staying put.

However, Blair says he's looking to remain at Brisbane.

"For me, it's about where I'm going to play my better football at the back end of my career.

I want to go out on a high and do everything for myself, I still talk to Mooks (Kearney) as a mate. He obviously does talk about visions of me coming home, but for me it's about where do I finish up and how it looks for me and my family. Where I am now, I'm in a good place."

Praise For Pete!

Now at the risk of being accused of sucking up, I am going to include some feedback Peter got about his introduction to the newsletter last week.

He is a bit shy, and would be worried it seemed like he was blowing his own trumpet, but I think it's important to acknowledge that despite being charged with being a cheerleader for an underperforming team, there are plenty of others who agree with his sentiments about what it means to support a team.

People like toetapper01, who is in England – a lot closer to the terrible bombing in Manchester than

any of us – who wrote: Butch, you always put things in perspective. Looking forward to watching the lads v Broncos. Being over here so close to what happened is tough and scary. One of my best friends was there with her daughter. Life's too short.

Or Ricky Okay, who kept it short and sweet, saying, probably the best thing I have read in a long time. 100% true! We are with the Warriors no matter what - win or lose. Up the Warriors!

Then there was Kees Green, who wrote from OZ, such is the international reach of our humble newsletter, saying: This likely doesn't even make it to you but I agree with you 110%. I may live in Melbourne but I bleed Warriors blood.

I will support our boys through thick and thin, and watch every game.

I'm sick and tired of so called Warriors fans living in NZ giving the boys so much grief, to me they are simply bandwagon fans, they are the first to show support for a win and yet the first to moan when we lose. I wear my Warriors tops with pride here in Melbourne even after a run of losses, it's at these times when true fans show their true colours.

Tui Out

It must have been a nightmare waiting for the inevitable, but Tui Lolohea has finally gone, and there will be plenty of people sorry to see him go, still convinced he has the potential to be a real star of the game.

To be fair to the youngster – he is still only 22 – he has been a victim of his own versatility, having played pretty much everywhere for us, without ever cementing a regular starting spot.

He was initially included on the bench for the Broncos, but come Saturday morning he was instead saying his goodbyes, and that can't have been the ideal preparation for a side waiting to play at 7.30pm either.

Lolohea still had 18 months on his contract, but it was clear to a blind man he had no future with us, despite all the talk out of the club about his place in the squad.

"Tui and his management recently asked us permission to talk to other clubs about a possible move and requested an early release," said recruitment manager Tony Iro said.

Continued on next page...

Continued from previous page...

What a waste.

Lolohea made his NRL debut in 2014 and played 52 first-grade games, scoring 17 tries and kicking 18 goals for 104 points.

What are the chances he comes back to Mt Smart and rips us a new one in Tigers colours? You can see it coming, can you not?

Zac In

With Tui hitting the exit, in comes Zac Santo from the Raiders, on a second-tier contract.

You could be forgiven for never having heard of him, since he has only managed three NRL games one as a Cowboy and two as a Raider.

A decent work ethic, and a bit of luck, might well see him get more game time at Mt Smart. It is not as if we are that blessed, although am I the only one who can not get his head around having someone with the finishing ability of David Fusitu'a, and playing him at centre?

Santo can also play fullback, and was named fullback in the ISP team of the year last season.

"We've been following Zac for a while and we're excited he has become available in mid-season to give us more options in our outside backs," recruitment and development manager Tony Iro said.

Ligi Signs On Too

We have also re-signed Ligi Sao until the end of the 2019 season. The 24-year-old came in last season after three-years at Manly, making 21 appearances.

He's been seven times so far this season, after an injury-hampered campaign in 2016 that included his first appearance for us against the Dogs in Wellington.

"Ligi has been a great acquisition for us, bringing his experience from Manly and helping to give us depth among our middle forwards," Iro said.

The Oddest Story Of The Week Prize Goes To....

You read some really odd suggestions, but former Kiwis and Warriors' captain Duane Mann has come up with a real doozy. Let's be fair, the man knows a hell of a lot more than me about the game, but he reckons we need to move Shaun Johnson to fullback, Roger Tuivasa-Sheck to five-eighth, and Foran to No 7.

Mann was a foundation signing after a long and successful career in England, but I don't think Kearney is going to be picking up on that advice.

Mann played hooker for the Kiwis from 1989-1993 – a stint that included 24 consecutive tests.

Well Done Albert

I confess it. I am a big fan of Albert Vete, so I was delighted he played really well on Saturday.

The prop says uncertainty over his future did affect his early-season form, and he remains unsigned, although he is meeting with his manager this week to go through his options.

Ben Matulino goes to the Tigers next year and Jacob Lillyman is not getting any younger, so I'd find a place for him, even though he was sent back to reserve grade footy this year.

But do we really want to consign a 110kg, 1.88m-tall hard-running prop to history? Roll the dice and put a contract in front of him.

Castle Falls

Normally the comings and goings at the management level of the game would barely attract my attention but the resignation of Kiwi Raelene Castle from the Doggies smells like something that has a lot more behind it than we are being told.

The chief executive goes at the end of the season, after four years, but with a year to run on her contract.

There's been all the usual tosh about finding a new challenge, and there has been lots of praise heaped on the first woman to control a club.

What hasn't been so public is the tension with Bulldogs chairman Ray Dib over an email Castle sent to clubs complaining about a breach in protocol by the Rugby League Players' Association that alleged it met with a select group of club chairmen - set up by Dib - over collective bargaining.

The Dogs also gave a new deal to coach Des Hasler, and have got Aaron Woods and Kieran Foran for 2018, a pretty good effort for a club that recently got fined more than \$60,000 for salary cap breaches in 2016.



Kata to face Parramatta

by Richard Becht

CENTRE SOLOMONE Kata returns from a two-game injury-enforced absence for the Vodafone Warriors' 13th-round NRL encounter with the Parramatta Eels at ANZ Stadium in Sydney on Friday night (7.50pm kick-off NZT; 9.50pm NZT).

The 22-year-old Kiwi and Tonga international has been sidelined with a calf injury he picked up late in the 10th-round loss to Penrith.

He missed the defeat by St George Illawarra in Hamilton and Saturday night's 28-10 win over Brisbane at Mount Smart Stadium but is now back on the left edge to face the Eels.

Kata's inclusion results in David Fusitu'a moving back to the right wing replacing rookie Charnze Nicoll-Klokstad.

It's the only change to the starting side used in the dominant display against Brisbane, a result which gave the Vodafone Warriors a 5-7 win-loss record leaving them two points outside the top eight.

Head coach Stephen Kearney has listed Jacob Lillyman in jersey #18 with the match against the Eels coming just 48 hours after the veteran prop plays his 14th Origin game for Queensland in the series opener against New South Wales in Brisbane tomorrow night.

"We'll wait to see how Jake comes

through the Origin game tomorrow night," he said.

"With Sol fit to return we had to make a tough decision about leaving Charnze out. He has done well since being given his opportunity so it's disappointing for him to miss this game."

Friday night's match is the first of back-to-back away games for the Vodafone Warriors, followed by their 14th-round clash against Gold Coast in Robina on Saturday, June 10 (3.00pm kick-off local time; 5.00pm NZT).

It's just the second outing at ANZ Stadium for the club since playing against Manly in the 2011 NRL grand final. The only other appearance was the final regular season game there against Canterbury-Bankstown in 2015. In their 16 matches at ANZ Stadium, the Vodafone Warriors have won six, drawn one and lost nine.

They face the Eels after their best performance of the season last week, underlined by a raft of impressive statistics.

Among them was a completion rate of 32 from 37 sets (86 per cent) while Brisbane was reduced to 22 from 37 (59 per cent). They made 1849 metres to 1521, missed 25 tackles to Brisbane's 45 and had only five errors to the visitors' 15.

It will be the 38th time the two

teams have met with Parramatta holding a 20-17 edge overall but a 12-5 advantage at home including two 'home' wins in Hamilton.

However, the Vodafone Warriors won the last away meeting 17-13 with a Bodene Thompson golden point try two years ago and four of their five away wins against the Eels have come in the last seven encounters since 2008.

Friday night's match will be Ryan Hoffman's 299th career appearance leaving him set to become the 27th player to join the 300 club when the Vodafone Warriors face the Titans on June 10.

Vodafone Warriors

1 Roger Tuivasa-Sheck

2 David Fusitu'a

3 Blake Ayshford

4 Solomon Kata

5 Ken Maumalo

6 Kieran Forans

7 Shaun Johnson

8 James Gavet

9 Issac Luke

10 Ben Matulino

11 Bodene Thompson

12 Ryan Hoffman

13 Simon Mannering

Interchange:

14 Nathaniel Roache

15 Sam Lisone

16 Albert Vete

17 Bunty Afoa

18 Jacob Lillyman

20 Charnze Nicoll-Klokstad

21 Toafofoa Siple

22 Mafoa'aeata Hingano



*Adam Blair, at press conference to announce his captaincy.
Photo www.photosport.nz*



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)

Adam Blair: Leading The Way

KIWIS COACH David Kidwell has taken an important step towards restoring New Zealand's World Cup credibility by appointing Adam Blair as his team captain. On recent form the Kiwis, while ranked second in the world, deserve to be no better than third favourites behind Australia and England for cup glory. They have plummeted from the heady days of 2014-15 when three consecutive victories over the Kangaroos earned them top rating. With no known warm-up fixtures planned, the Kiwis begin their cup campaign, and also their quest to regain the faith of their fans, against Samoa at Mount Smart Stadium on October 28.

Quite a few names were bandied about to succeed the sidelined Jesse Bromwich as national captain, and Simon Mannering would have been just about everyone's preferred choice. But Kidwell has done the right thing to respect Mannering's preference not be reappointed to the post. We all know Mannering will be giving a great example as a member of the leadership group and an invaluable all-rounder in the forward pack. So Blair was the logical man to shoulder the captaincy responsibilities of a squad whose reputation was tarnished on and off the field during Anzac Test weekend in Canberra earlier this month.

Blair, aged 30, is the first Northlander to lead the Kiwis. He did this in conjunction with Issac Luke on the short tour of England in 2015 when Mannering was not available. That Test series was lost 2-1 and former coach Stephen Kearney's decision to have co-captains did not prove to be justified. It was difficult to define who exactly was in charge and Luke was especially uncomfortable when the media microphones and tape recorders were poked under his nose. Not everybody is. Blair was marginally more relaxed and will benefit from that experience now that he has been given the sole responsibility for the World Cup.

The drawback with having a prop as captain in the modern era is the inevitable spells when he will be interchanged. But that applied as much to Bromwich as Blair, and the former did not have Mannering as his first lieutenant at last year's Four Nations. When Blair is off the field the captaincy should smoothly switch to Mannering. Both men lead by example. Blair was also endorsed by his Brisbane Broncos (and England) coach Wayne Bennett last weekend. Bennett worked with Blair and the Kiwis during the triumphant 2008 World Cup campaign and was quick to sign him for the Broncos when he returned to Brisbane in 2015.

Born in Whangarei, Blair was scouted by Melbourne Storm at the age of 16 and transferred from Whangarei Boys High School to Wavell State High School. He was twice a Junior Kiwi and played for feeder club Norths Devils in the Queensland Cup before making his NRL debut for the Storm in 2006. It was a breakthrough season, culminating in a Grand Final loss to the Broncos and selection for the Kiwis, who lost their Four Nations title to Australia in golden point time. Injury sidelined him for much of 2007 but the World Cup in 2008 restored his international status and he was a try-scorer in the 34-20 final victory over Australia.

Continued on next page...

Continued from previous page...

Blair was vice-captain of the Kiwis as early as 2010, when he featured in the Four Nations final win over the Kangaroos at Suncorp Stadium. The trio of 2014-15 victories gave him a personal total of five over our trans-Tasman rivals. So he knows what it takes to beat the Kangaroos, no matter how many future Immortals they might have in their ranks. Blair recently exceeded 250 NRL appearances but not all of that has been plain sailing. A three-season term with Wests Tigers between the Storm and Broncos did not go well and in 2013 the Daily Telegraph outlandishly asked whether he was “the worst NRL signing of all time?”

Of course, Bennett knew better and Blair was to the fore of the forward pack which carried the Broncos into the 2015 Grand Final, only to be beaten by Johnathan Thurston's golden point field goal. Blair has taken his Test tally to 41. Only six New Zealanders (including Luke and Mannering on 42) have appeared in more. The 40-year-old Kidwell and Blair, former Melbourne club-mates and Kiwis team-mates, must quickly and clearly establish their duties as coach and captain and for their authority to filter through the entire squad. With Samoa, Scotland and Tonga as their World Cup pool opponents there is no soft lead-up time.

Predictably, only minutes after Blair was appointed captain Radio Sport loud mouth Mark Watson was rubbishing the Kiwis in general and Kidwell in particular. The previous week Watson called for the Warriors to be disbanded. Apparently Watson does not mind presenting himself as an elitist puritan who is quite happy to reveal his prejudice against “working class rugby”. He previously targeted cricket and the Black Caps, accusing players of being unfit until Jesse Ryder shut him up in a charity boxing match. One wonders how many listeners and advertisers that Watson's nasal negatives have cost Radio Sport. Turn him off. I have.

The Missing Link: South Africa

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)



LAST WEEK I wrote about the recently released world rugby league rankings and how they related to the 2017 World Cup tournament. Critics who claim rugby league is essentially played in only a handful of countries would be surprised that the list of rated nations now extends to 42, thanks largely to groups of unpaid enthusiasts laying foundations throughout the Pacific, Europe, North America, Asia and Scandinavia. The saddest single feature of the rankings, however, was finding South Africa as low as number 32, below Greece, Sweden, Netherlands and Niue and immediately above Hungary, Philippines, Thailand and Chile.

Of all those countries, only South Africa is established in either rugby code and has proved that it is capable of producing top quality rugby league players, even if they did emerge via rugby union. A Springbok rugby league team has toured Australia and New Zealand and individual players have proudly worn the emblems of some of the most famous British and Australian clubs. But of course it is because South Africa is so heavily invested in the 15-a-side code that its 13-a-side counterpart has never been allowed to flourish. Whenever it has looked likely to take root and grow a heavily studded rugby union boot has stomped on it.

A few South Africans discovered rugby league before the Second World War. The best known was Adrian Jacobus Van Heerden, who had scored the first ever Springbok try in a rugby union Test against New Zealand and is the only Springbok to have also represented his country at an Olympic Games (in the 400m hurdles). The speedy wing scored 107 tries in 127 matches for the champion Wigan side of the mid-1920s and later played for Leigh. But it was not until the 1950s that a serious attempt was made to establish rugby league in South Africa.

Continued on next page...

After several years of discussions between a committee in South African and English Rugby League officials, it was announced Great Britain and France would play three matches on their way home from the 1957 World Cup in Australia. Battle lines were immediately drawn when Danie Craven, the dictatorial head of the South African Rugby Union, described rugby league players as “reptiles”. Schoolboys were told they would be declared professional if they played on fields where rugby league players had trained. Only two of the three planned fixtures were held. The British and French teams treated them as exhibitions and curious spectators, accustomed to the physicality of fierce rugby union rivalries, were not impressed.

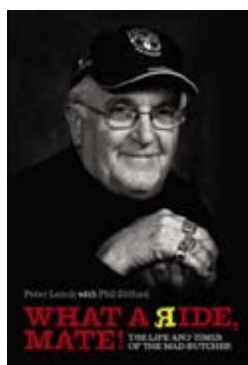
Ludwig Japhet, head of the committee which organised the 1957 matches, died soon after and two separate organisations rose up and started club competitions in 1962. That confused the situation and their mutual hostility was counter-productive. The International Rugby League Board managed to sort that out by favouring one over the other and a Springbok rugby league side was invited to tour Australia and New Zealand in 1963. I had been at The Press only a few months when, as a 16-year-old, I saw the team arrive at Christchurch Airport. Big men in green and gold blazers, plus a few protesters waving banners. It was all very confusing.

Captained by legendary lock forward Dawie Ackermann, and boasting several other rugby union internationals, the Springboks were over-matched in Australia and suffered heavy losses in both Tests. Some British clubs which promised to release South African stars such as Tom Van Vollenhoven, Wilf Rosenberg, Louis Newmann and Trevor Lake reneged on the deal and the side was seriously short of proven rugby league players. They did, however, beat New Zealand 4-3 (two penalty goals to one try) by using union-style kick and chase tactics on a muddy Carlaw Park. By then they had been reinforced by two forwards from Sydney clubs.

Rugby union reaction back in South Africa was savage. Businessmen who had supported the tour were bankrupted, municipalities were instructed not to provide grounds and the “rebels” branded as traitors and outcasts and banned for life. Some signed for overseas clubs. Goal kicking fullback Fred Griffiths starred for Wigan and later captain-coached North Sydney. It was another 30 years before rugby league raised its head again, with Aucklander Paul Matete coaching the South African Rhinos against Queensland and Western Reds (Perth) in 1994.

Despite serious financial problems, the Rhinos qualified for the 1995 World Cup in England, where they were coached by Welshman Tony Fisher. They were given no favours in the draw and suffered thrashings by Australia 86-6, England 46-0 and Fiji 52-6. They clearly should have been in the Emerging Nations tournament held at the same time. Undeterred, the Rhinos also made the cut for the 2000 World Cup, where their inexperience was again exposed. The Rhinos lost 66-18 to Tonga and 56-6 to France while achieving a more respectable 16-0 loss to Papua New Guinea, all their games being played in France.

South Africa withdrew from a 2008 World Cup qualifying series because of more financial problems and was well beaten by United States in a 2013 World Cup qualifier. Despite home ground advantage, its 2017 World Cup hopes crashed in 40-12 and 50-16 defeats by Lebanon in October 2015. The SARL website records two losses to Niue in 2016. The struggle for recognition, even survival, goes on. Magazine stories of development work in poor black townships over the years were heartening but do not appear to have amounted to much. From afar, it looks as if the rugby league ant is still being squashed by the rugby union elephant.



If you're a member of the Auckland library, you can get a copy of my book out WHAT A RIDE MATE written by my good friend Phil Gifford. Auckland Libraries have 10 copies circulating around Auckland libraries or if you want to buy one I can sell you one at a discount price delivered anywhere in New Zealand for \$20. I'll even personally sign the book for you. Just email me your address and I will email you back my bank details pcleitch@xtra.co.nz



By Miles Davis

Lance Todd

WHO WOULD have thought that a rugby union player from Otahuhu would end up with his name immortalised on one of England's most prestigious rugby league trophies? Well it happened to Lancelot Beaumont Todd.

Lance Todd started playing rugby union as a lad for the Parnell club and earned his way into the Auckland side. In 1907 he was selected for the North Island but refused to sign a declaration that he would remain an amateur so did not play. When Bert Baskerville (a man who played a huge part in the development of rugby league in Australasia and will be covered in a future article) organised an overseas tour for professional players, Todd was one of the first players on the roster and 4 of the 1905 Originals were also included in the squad. All players in the touring party were given life bans by the New Zealand Rugby Union. After playing some games in Australia future star Kangaroo, Dally Messenger, was included in the touring squad to the UK.

After a financially successful tour Todd decided that his immediate future would be in the UK so when the squad left for the return journey he stayed behind and signed for Wigan. As well as a signing on fee of 400 pounds he was given captaincy of the club.

Adept at both stand-off and centre Todd managed 185 games for Wigan scoring an impressive 126 tries. During the 1908 season he was approached by local coal merchant and club member Edward Croston and offered 20 pounds to throw a game. Todd refused and said he wouldn't do it 'for all the money in Wigan'. Croston was charged and sentenced to 2 months imprisonment with hard labour.

His first season with Wigan saw them win the Championship final 7-3 against Oldham. 1909/10 and 1910/11 seasons saw him play two more finals against the same opponents, both times finished on the losing side. In 1911 Wigan also made the Challenge Cup final where they were beaten by Broughton Rangers 4-0 (which remains the lowest aggregate score in a Challenge Cup final).

The next two seasons saw Todd play once again in Championship finals with Wigan being beaten both times by Huddersfield.

In 1914 Todd left Wigan and signed for Dewsbury but his career was interrupted by World War I and he enlisted with the ANZACS. After 5 years meritorious service where he was mentioned in dispatches and commissioned he returned to the UK where he became manager of the Blackpool North Shore golf club then landlord of the Ship Hotel in Wigan.

In 1928 he became manager of Salford when they were on the verge of extinction. Over the next decade he rebuilt the club, leading them to the play-offs in his first season then to 3 Championship wins (1933, 37, 39). He led them to the Challenge Cup Final in 1938 where they beat Barrow 7-4 at Wembley. He took them back to Wembley in 1939 where they fell just short of a league and cup double going down 20-3 to Halifax.

Continued on next page...

Continued from previous page...

Not content with one job, during his tenure at Salford he had become one of rugby league's foremost commentators on BBC radio and managed the Lancashire baseball team in a clash against Yorkshire in 1935.

At the outbreak of World War II Todd once again enlisted, this time with the Home Guard. As a Captain he became adjutant of the 43rd County of Lancaster Battalion. On 14th November 1942 when returning from duty, along with his commanding officer Lieutenant-Colonel Frank Sewell, his car hit an electric tram pole killing both men.

In 1946 as recognition of his services to rugby league as a player, coach and commentator the Lance Todd Trophy was brought into being to honour the Man of the Match in the Challenge Cup Final. Although any player can win the trophy it is owned by the Red Devils Association (the official body of the ex-Salford players association).

Although undoubtedly a son of Aotearoa, Todd is buried in Wigan cemetery along with wife Ann and daughter Inez.

Challenge Cup Final 1938

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vlauPccpE9E>

Challenge Cup Final 1939

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=x374oERFQ2Q>



Want to be rewarded for being a Vodafone Warriors fan? Vodafone has an exclusive deal just for you!

Receive up to \$20 off open term plans every month on New Zealand's leading network.

And, if you want a shiny new smartphone to take snaps of you and your mates at the games, you can pay it off over 12 or 24 months Interest Free, with \$0 deposit.

For more information and to make the most of this offer, head to: www.vodafone.co.nz/warriors-club-offers/

An exclusive deal for Vodafone Warriors fans

Receive up to \$20 off
open term plans.

Vodafone
Power to you



Hero

By Barry Ross



PAUL GALLEN was the hero for a sellout home crowd in the Sharks tight 9-8 win over the Bulldogs on Saturday night. With 14 minutes to go, Des Hasler's boys were leading 8-2 and hammering the Sharks tryline. A grubber kick into the in-goal area seemed likely to give the Bulldogs a repeat set from the line drop-out, when Gallen collected the ball and crashed back into the field of play through two Canterbury defenders. This play the ball was the beginning of a superb attacking move which allowed centre Gerard Beale to run 65 metres just one tackle later and score a converted try at the other end of the field. The scores were then locked up at 8-all with 12 minutes to play. But the Sharks captain wasn't finished and with three minutes left on the clock, he rumbled forward for 25 metres on the fifth tackle, taking the ball to 10 metres from the Bulldogs tryline and in front of the posts. Halfback Chad Townsend then landed the match winning field goal. Gallen's overall stats were also impressive. In his 65 minutes on the field, he ran for 240 metres in his 22 ball carries, completed 27 tackles and made one line break. Eleven weeks short of his 36th birthday, Gallen was playing his 291st NRL game, in which he has scored 60 tries. With four of their best players, Wade Graham, James Maloney, Andrew Fifita and Jack Bird, missing due to State of Origin commitments, the understrength Sharks stood up against the Bulldogs to keep their team near the top of the ladder. To be fair, the Bulldogs were also weakened from the loss of State of Origin men and they were missing Brett Morris, Josh Jackson and David Klemmer. Gerard Beale also stood out for the Sharks and as well as collecting his team's only try, he made 158 metres in his 10 runs, completed 18 tackles and one linebreak in his 80 minutes. Almost 27 years of age, Beale has now scored 40 tries in his 149 first grade games with the Broncos, the Dragons and the Sharks. Valentine Holmes, who missed out on a place in the Queensland team for Origin One, was impressive at fullback, running for 183 metres in his 80 minutes on the park and landing both his shots at goal in the absence of Maloney. Young hooker, 21 year old Jayden Brailey, also played the full 80 minutes and topped the Sharks tackle count with 52, while 33 year old warhorse Luke Lewis made 40 tackles in his 73 minutes of play. Lewis has now played 294 first grade games, scoring 113 tries. Barring injury both he and Gallen will reach the 300 game mark later this season. Both veterans will play key roles for the Sharks in the State of Origin period. Cronulla has a bye this weekend and then meet the Storm in a blockbuster at the Southern Cross Group Stadium (Shark Park) on Thursday night, 8 June. The Sharks home ground was packed on Saturday night with 20,457 cramming in to watch the victory over the Bulldogs and unless it is raining, another maximum attendance is on the cards for the Melbourne game.

The Warriors were impressive at Mt. Smart on Saturday. We all know the Broncos were without seven Origin stars, but they still contained some top class players such as Adam Blair, Ben Hunt, Benji Marshall and Jimmy the Jet Roberts. The Warriors were on their game from the start and their completion rate was 87 percent. By comparison, the Broncos completed just 59 percent of their sets, as well as missing 45 tackles and making 15 handling errors. These stats show just how much pressure the visitors were put under by Stephen Kearney's boys. A similar display this Friday night at Sydney's ANZ Stadium against Parramatta, will put the Warriors back on track for a top eight position. Roger Tuivasa-Sheck's 210 running metres against the Broncos and Bodene Thompson's 38 tackles, were key factors in the win.

Watching the Raiders-Roosters match on Sunday, I had to agree with one of the Fox TV commentators when he made a remark about the Bunker. He pondered how it was that the Bunker could not adjudicate on possible forward passes in the lead-up to a try, but could rule on offside when players chase a kick. Sometimes this is very tight yet the Bunker ruled that some Roosters chasers were in front of a kick and so denied the visitors an early try. To me this ruling was far from obvious. Soon after this there could have been a forward pass in the lead-up to the Raiders first try but the try stood. Two big decisions which affected the final result.

Continued on next page...

Continued from previous page...

I had an email from Lee Johnson, the President of the Norwegian Rugby League, in which he told me how his competition operates. There are seven sides in their competition, playing in two zones. The Northern zone comprises The OSLO CAPITALS, the BODO BARBARIANS and the TRONDHEIM RUGBYLKUBB. The four Western zone sides are the FLEKKEFJORD TIGERS, the PORSGRUNN PIRATES, the STAVANGER STORM and the SANDNES RAIDERS. There are also five up and coming clubs in Norwegian rugby League, who do not play in the domestic competition but play some social games and act as feeder clubs to the domestic competition teams. These clubs are Sparbu Rugby, Nannesstad Norsemen, Kragero Rugby, Lillestrom Lions and Farsund Bobcats. Two Kiwis have played key roles in developing Norwegian Rugby League over the last few years. They are Isaac Schmidt, who is with the Oslo Capitals and Dave Hunter who is the National coach. Dave has completed his level two coaching course and has a squad of 28 players preparing for an international game with Sweden on 17 June. I will give more information about these Norwegian clubs in the next few newsletters.

The Toronto Wolfpack did not play last weekend and meet the Coventry Bears this Saturday, 3 June, in Toronto.

Expectation Of A Tight Series Has Origin Fever In The Air

By John Deaker



THE STATE of Origin fever in the air is as great as it's ever been going into Game 1 on Wednesday night. This is partly because the teams appear to be very evenly matched which hasn't always been the case the last decade while Queensland has been so successful.

For many years now there's been speculation that Queensland's dominance may have led to interest in State of Origin waning. It's debatable whether that's been the case and you also get the feeling the discussion has often been provoked by reporters and fans from other sporting codes that have often been envious of Origin's unique rivalry.

It's a sure sign how tight this series is likely to be that on Monday the TAB had New South Wales the narrow favourite head-to-head (for game 1) at \$1.85 for the win v Queensland's \$1.90. That also comes despite Queensland having the home advantage at Suncorp Stadium for game 1.

It appears the Queensland selectors have done their team no favours on many levels by omitting Billy Slater from their side. Apart from missing his obvious playing ability, the selectors also seem to have put the team under a lot more pressure this week by leaving out Slater. Not only could this be negative for Queensland's preparation it could also have helped New South Wales by removing so much of the spotlight from their camp - and in particular Mitchell Pearce.

The extent that Jonathon Thurston and Greg Inglis are missed by Queensland will be fascinating to watch this week , though so much of that will be determined by the platform that their forwards can provide for a player like Anthony Milford to slip in seamlessly.

This 2017 series is undoubtedly a great opportunity for New South Wales to get a victory and remind us all that this became such an absorbing contest in the first place not just because of the hatred between the two States but also because both teams were so evenly matched from match to match and series to series. Expect both teams to go as hard as they ever have on Wednesday night and provide another memorable chapter in State of Origin's magnificent history book.

Prediction: New South Wales win game 1 by 5 points (yes, that is from a hard-core Queensland fan too!)

Short and Sharp

By John Holloway



SHORWT AND sharp this week team have run out of time... firstly good to see our boys "Back on the Horse". They were on a hiding to nothing really with the Broncos losing a lot of starpower a win was always going to be treated a bit sceptically and a loss would have been a catastrophe but looking at Bennetts battlers they put together a very strong line-up anyway and a win was not the foregone conclusion many imagined. I thought that our team stepped up a notch and we got the W comfortably in the end. Well done Warriors. The 50/50 clash between the Eels and Bunnies was taken out by the Parrapower 22/16... Gutherson showing his versatility, determination and rising influence in Cory Normans absence. The reigning champ Sharks got out of jail 9/8 with Chad Townsends late 1 pointer the difference in an ultra-tight affair where the Bulldogs were in the box seat most of the match. The old warhorse Gallen turned back the clock with a powerful performance that got his team home. Rampant Rapanas doubled helped the Raiders get over the Roosters 24/16 to close out the weekend.

State versus State, mate versus mate, ladies bring a plate... she's all on again Wednesday night (possibly last night if you get this column on Thursday). I am a dyed in the wool Queenslander for this fixture but

head over heart I reckon the Blues will take this in the normal close run finish. My reasoning is around the loss of key Maroons top prop Scott, Johnny Thurston and to a slightly lesser degree Inglis and Parker. This is a lot of glue to lose for a side whose main attribute has been the ability to stick together to the end. The Blues on the other hand look freshened with the injection of young talents Bird, Tedesco, Peats, Moylan and Trbojevic who will be strongly reinforced by the firepower of Dugan, Ferguson, Hayne Fifita and Frizzell. Too much for Cam Smiths indomitable crew to cope with I fear.

Right next weeks fixture list. The Storm should beat the Knights, The Eels at home might start fave against the mighty Warriors, Dragons should account for the Tigers. The Roosters v Broncos in Sydney will be very close and the local derby Cowboys v Titans should be a home win in Townsville. The Sea Eagles v Raiders is an interesting tie with Manly looking hard to beat at Lottoland this year. The Bulldogs get Morris and Klemmer back and could close out the unlucky Panthers but it could still go either way. The Mountain men are much better than their lowly placing suggests. Riding the pine on a bye this week are the Sharks and the Rabbitohs.

That's it folks have a great long weekend.

Auckland Live presents

MARK HADLOW IN **MAMIL**

BY GREGORY COOPER

**NINE CHARACTERS.
ONE BIKE.
ALL IN LYCRA.**

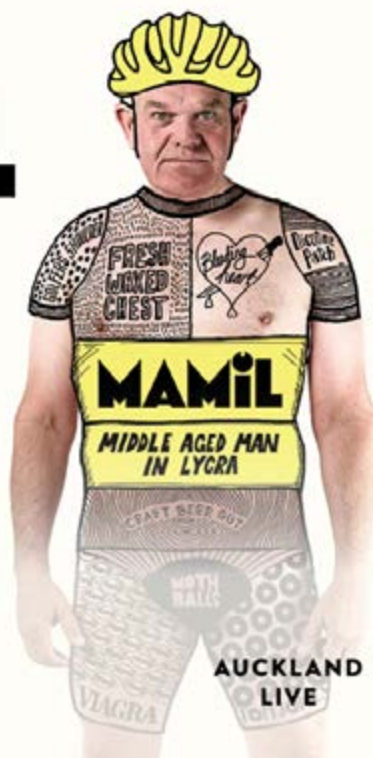
9 & 10 JUNE

Bruce Mason Centre, Takapuna

aucklandlive.co.nz or 0800 111 999

Regional Facilities Auckland kiwiveelo

Originally commissioned by Auckland Live.



Don't Miss Mark Hadlow In A Wheel Funny Show!

We have a fantastic show starring Mark Hadlow returning to Auckland after its very popular nation-wide tour with over 35,000 audience members left in awe!

Slip on your finest lycra and cycle to the shore to see MAMIL this June, an achingly funny show presenting the male mid-life crisis in all its lurid glory.

<https://www.aucklandlive.co.nz/show/mamil>

A Win is a Win

By Miles Davis



I AM A huge fan of rugby league but unlike many Kiwis I am not enamoured with State of Origin. I see it as an over-hyped marketing exercise designed to generate revenue and a series that lost its chemistry over a decade ago. In the meantime it severely disrupts the NRL with players being taken out of side for crucial games. It also influences players when choosing the nationality of their international representation. James 'the turncoat' Tamou being a classic example.

One advantage it does have however is that it leaves the Vodafone Warriors largely unaffected and able to take on several weakened sides. The victory against the Broncos at the weekend was one such fixture. Now there are many who will say that the victory is tarnished because of the absence of many Broncos stars but I disagree. You can only ever play against the side that fronts up against you and the two points earned are as good and as legitimate as any others. The win also lifts the mood of the Vodafone Warriors camp and their supporters and is likely (as previous years have shown) to lead to an upturn in performances and results.

The Aussies are always nobbling the Kiwis with moody suspensions in the week before a test encounter so I am more than happy to take whatever advantage presents itself for the Vodafone Warriors during a State of Origin week.

The Loyal Player – A Dying Breed

I WAS LUCKY enough to grow up watching my beloved West Ham in an era where it was not unusual to have players spend their entire career with one club. Such was the loyalty and omni-presence of players that I could probably still name most of the starting XI's of the likes of Chelsea, Leeds, Manchester United, Liverpool, Arsenal, Spurs from the early 1970's.

New Zealand rugby and rugby league still have some long-term heroes, Manu Vatuvei and Simon Mannering immediately spring to mind, but modern professional soccer players change their clubs more often than their underwear. There is however the odd exception and I would like to pay tribute to one of them who has just retired after 28 years with his local club.

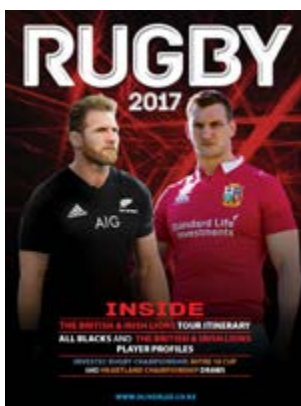
Francesco Totti joined Roma when he was 13 and made his first team debut at the tender age of 16 in a 2-0 win at Brescia. He ended his career at age 40, having notched 786 games and a record 307 goals, coming on in a 3-2 win over Genoa that ensured Champions League football for Roma next season.

He was a World Cup winner with Italy in 2006 and in 2011 was recognised as the most popular footballer in the world.

In the age of 1 year contracts it is heart-warming to see that there are still some players that love their football club as much as the fans do.

Arrivederci Francesco, mille grazie.

Totti says goodbye to the Roma faithful <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3L0kRXUWJcU>



The latest issue of the Rugby magazine was published on Sunday last and is now available to read (and download) online by clicking: www.oliverlee.co.nz/rugby2017



THE NEW ZEALAND BARBARIANS RUGBY CLUB PRESENTS



BRANCOTT ESTATE™
LETTER SERIES™

**RUGBY
TIES**

DATE: THURSDAY 6TH JULY 2017

VENUE: Auckland Viaducts Event Centre
Wynyard Wharf

TIME: 6:00pm for 6:45pm seated

COST: Tables From \$2,500 incl GST
Individual From \$250 incl GST

CONTACT: Simon Johnston
events@brfc.co.nz

ENTERTAINMENT

4 All Black greats including
Sean Fitzpatrick &
Sir Brian Lochore

VS

4 Lions greats including
Gavin Hastings, Martyn
Williams MBE

TICKETS: www.ticketmaster.co.nz
Search "Rugby Ties"

RUGBY TIES SUPPORTED CHARITIES



Omahu Stalwart New Unicorns Coach

By Shane Hurdell
Hawkes Bay Today Sports Reporter



NEW HAWKE'S Bay Unicorns rugby league team coach Aki Renata accepted his appointment with mixed emotions this week.

"While I was quite chuffed to get the job I'm hoping to change the rule which states I can only pick players from teams which played in the Coast to Coast comp. Because that will mean I can only pick Bridge Pa players because that was the only Bay team which played in the comp this year," Renata explained.

"Hopefully I will be able to select players from teams which played in our Spring comp last year as there are some talented youngsters in those teams who could handle the step up," Renata said.

However Rugby League Hawke's Bay secretary Mike Tamati said the rule is a Mid Central competition rule and it won't be changed. It is obviously aimed at encouraging more clubs to enter teams in the Coast to Coast comp and if RLHB officials stick with their stance hopefully more Bay clubs will enter the comp next season and this will make Renata's job a little easier.

An Omahu Huia club stalwart, Renata, 53, has been involved with the club since 1988. He has coached Omahu teams to 14 grand finals at premier or premier reserve grade levels and won nine of them. Last year his Omahu team lost to Bridge Pa in the Spring comp premier grade final.

This season the Unicorns will play three games in the Mid Central inter-provincial competition. They will open their campaign with a home game against Wellington at the Hawke's Bay Regional Sports Park in Hastings in July before playing away games against Manawatu and Taranaki.

Renata will finalise his support staff later this week.

Rugby League Hawke's Bay chairman Dion Te Ahu, who was the last Unicorns coach when the team last played in 2015, was thrilled with a Central Vipers women's training team camp staged in the Bay last weekend as part of the team's buildup to this weekend's national women's tournament in Auckland. Eight Bay players are in the team.

They are former Kiwi Fern Chanel Huddleston, Awhina Wainohu, Abby Collier, Jaimee Robin, Jess Bennett, Laurae Blake, Sylvia Bockman and Te Aroha Hunt.

There was plenty of reminiscing for Hawke's Bay Unicorns players and supporters from the mid 1990s at the funeral of Taradale Rugby Club life member Rex Maxwell on Monday. Although a staunch union man several of Maxwell's family had strong league links.

His son Sam Maxwell was a blockbusting prop for the Unicorns during the 1990s and a key member of the Gary Kemble and Mark Elia-coached Lion Red Cup teams. One of his former son-in-laws, Tui Tareha, coached the Unicorns during the early 1990s and was a Hawke's Bay Premiership title-winning coach with the old Taradale Eagles club.

Another of his former son-in-laws, Richard Broughton, played for the Unicorns during the mid 1990s and the New Zealand Residents team before heading to England for a Super League stint with Warrington. In Britain Broughton played under the name of Richard Henare as that was the name on his passport.

One of the fastest wingers of his era on the planet, Henare, was one of the few to out pace Great Britain speedster Martin Offiah on a regular basis. Henare is a brother of current Tall Blacks and Breakers basketball team coach Paul Henare.

NEW COACH Omahu Huia stalwart Aki Renata is the new Hawke's Bay Unicorns coach.





THE TAKAHIWAI Warriors have shown why they are the defending champions in the Rugby League Northland Premiership after crushing the Northern Wairoa Bulls 76-0.

The Warriors led 24-0 at the break and then put the foot down in the second half running in 52 second-half points, which saw 11 different players score tries during the match for the home side.

In other results, the Moerewa Tigers had a massive win over the Hikurangi Stags 72-12.

The Tigers kept the Stags scoreless in the second half after leading 34-12 at the break.

Meanwhile the Otangarei Knights had a hard fought 34-22 win over the Portland Panthers.

With the latest round complete, the Warriors still lead the standings on 16 points, closely followed by the Knights and Tigers on 14 and 12 points respectively.

The Panthers round out the top four, on seven points, while the Stags who are also on seven points sit in fifth, but have a poor points differential. The Bulls and the Broncos are sixth and seventh on four points.

No games will be played this weekend due to Queens Birthday Weekend.

Adam Blair Named Northland's First Kiwis Captain In 90 Years

Whangarei-born Adam Blair has been named captain of the Kiwis squad for the Rugby League World Cup.

The 41-Test forward was named captain on Sunday, the day after the Broncos 28-10 loss to the Warriors in Auckland.

Blair has co-captained the Kiwis before, during the Tour of England in 2015 along with Isaac Luke.

What makes this announcement more special, is that Blair is the first captain of the Kiwis to come from the Northland region since Bert Avery in 1926-27.

"I'm happy with its all come. I'm excited to be here and honoured to get the opportunity," Blair said.

"I'm obviously a little bit nervous but pumped for the future and moving forward.

"I've been in talks with Kid (David Kidwell) for a while. Obviously there were a few other boys up for selection as well."

Earlier in the week, Blairs club coach Wayne Bennett backed the 30-year old for the job.

"Adam Blair would be very good," said Bennett.

"He's a very stable bloke, extremely responsible and always plays well himself, which is a pretty important part when you're captain.

"He has a great rapport with the players and he's meant a lot to the Broncos, I can tell you."

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



Facebook



Instagram



Twitter

WIN

2X TICKETS TO EVERY LIONS V NZ TEST MATCH

Plus gear to wear to the games

ENTER NOW



PRINCIPAL PARTNER

A Dark Night For Brisbane Broncos Warriors Dominated Broncos

By Victoria Patten

WHAT A mighty performance that was by the Warriors! They certainly put in a good WINNING shift on Saturday 27 May 2017, playing against the Broncos! It is fair to say that Broncos got a bit of old-fashioned Kiwi-bashing through the dominant display in attack and defence by the mighty Warriors.

Although the Broncos were left without their Origin stars, the Warriors dominated through their own endeavour on the night that's for sure! The match was all about the mighty team and that's what they delivered! Ahead at 16-0 at half-time, the Warriors had no desire to take their foot off the gas and landed on a priceless 28-10 victory over Broncos!

However, the spectacular victory of the Mighty Warriors wasn't the only highlight of the night within the Sir Peter Leitch Club lounge. The night was also dedicated to the reunion of the NZ Police Recruit Wing 259, with the legendary Mad Butcher being the wing patron himself! What a night for the reunion.

On behalf of Wing 259, I would like to take this opportunity to say a few things to the greatest patron in history, Sir Peter Leitch, the Mad Butcher, Butch. Butch, to be fair... you are one great Kiwi bloke that has changed the lives of a lot of people and has grown the game of rugby league in New Zealand to what it is today, which is a bloody great game...leaving the Aussies poaching all our players!

Butch, we are deeply honoured and forever grateful to have you as our patron.

It all started in June 2009 and eight years later, we still remember the late nights of study, the new friendships, the comradery, the great instructors and the place we called home for 6 months – Royal New Zealand Police College.

But the best memories were thanks to you Butch - our weekend of 22-23 August 2009 watching the Warriors beat Canberra Raiders 34-20, your presence at our graduation and ball, your humorous newsletters, the BBQ at your home in Waiheke, the ferry trip (although Bin may not wish to remember that one), and many, many more. Thank you for these memories Butch.

When it comes to people there is a saying that you should not believe words, you should barely believe actions, but believe in pattern – pattern says everything. And that is one of many great traits about the Mad Butcher – PATTERN. From the day I first met Butch to now – he has been consistently involved as our patron, supported us as a friend and guided us as a role model, and for that WE THANK YOU!

Thank you to the honourable Judith Collins and all of you guys and girls from Wing 259 who made it to the reunion. Starting from the delicious lunch at the Ellerslie races, followed by the tour of the Mt Smart stadium (which would not have been possible without Dexter Traill- Thank you), to the glorious match of Warriors v Broncos at the Sir Peter Leitch Club lounge. You couldn't ask for more!



COM
017

RLWC2017.CO
#RLWC2017

RLWC COUNTDOWN: 21 Weeks to GO!

By Daniel Fraser
New Zealand Media & PR
Manager RLWC 2017

New Zealand Kiwis Coach David Kidwell and England coach Wayne Bennett during a press conference.
Photo www.photosport.nz

IT WAS another huge week for Rugby League World Cup with Kiwis coach David Kidwell and England coach Wayne Bennett giving up their time to help us promote the tournament in Auckland last Friday.

Broncos coach Bennett predicted this World Cup would be the most competitive of the 15 tournaments staged since 1954 because of the new international eligibility, which allow players who qualify for more than one country to represent a tier-two nation if not chosen by Australia, New Zealand or England.

“I think when you get to the semi-final stage, if Australia, New Zealand and England are in the semi-finals, I think the other nation will be quite a challenge because they will have played in a quality competition and they will have to be pretty much at the top of their game as well to get to the semi-final stage,” he said at Mt Smart.

While it was all very friendly on Friday, if results go according to the current world rankings, Kidwell

and the second-placed Kiwis will meet Bennett and third-placed England in the semi-final at Mt Smart on November 25.

Kidwell and Bennett were both involved in 2008 when New Zealand lifted the World Cup for the first time after the Kiwis defeated Australia in the final and both believe the Kangaroos can be beaten again.

“In the 2008 World Cup we (the Kiwis) got beaten comprehensively by Australia but from then we handled the rest of the competition well,” said Bennett, who was an assistant coach for the Kiwis at the time.

Kidwell agreed: “Thinking back to 2008, everyone had belief. The whole 24 players, if you were playing on that field or you weren’t, we all bought in and that built throughout the tournament.”

New Zealand is hosting seven RLWC2017 matches, tickets are available now from www.rlwc2017.com, starting at \$10 for kids, \$20 for adults and \$45 for a family of four.



THE WORLD'S BEST ARE COMING ARE YOU?

AUCKLAND
NZ V SAMOA
28 OCTOBER
SEMI-FINAL
25 NOVEMBER

CHRISTCHURCH
NZ V SCOTLAND
4 NOVEMBER
QUARTER-FINAL
18 NOVEMBER

HAMILTON
SAMOA V TONGA
4 NOVEMBER
NZ V TONGA
11 NOVEMBER

WELLINGTON
QUARTER-FINAL
18 NOVEMBER

FOR TICKETS & ALL YOUR RLWC2017 INFORMATION GO TO RLWC2017.COM

#RLWC2017 | | |

*NZ pool matches only, subject to allocation selling out. Transaction & booking fees may apply.



FAMILY TICKETS
FROM
\$45



Pirates at the Top

By Talei Anderson

Photo: www.photosport.nz

PT CHEVALIER are the outright leaders of the SAS Fox Memorial Premiership after taking down rivals Howick 20-16 in a top-of-the-table clash at the Unitec sports field on Saturday May 27.

The Pirates and Hornets went into Saturday's match sitting even on twelve points. Howick led 10-4 at half-time, but the Pirates came out firing in the second half which saw them score in the final minute to secure their seventh victory this season.

The Hornets slip to second while Mt Albert, Glenora and Papakura follow to sit in the competitions top five.

In other games, Glenora hold the Konica Minolta Roope Rooster for another week after taking care of Richmond 44-10.

Nortcote – who celebrated 30 years since their first win of the Fox against Mangere East in 1987 – fell to the Hawks 26-22, Mangere East's first win of the season.

Papakura bounced back from their loss with a 20-16 win over Marist, while Te Atatu dealt a heavy blow to Mt Albert 6-38.

The SAS Fox Memorial competition has a bye round this weekend, but the Crown Lift Trucks Sharman Cup divisions will still be played.

Otahuhu currently lead the Sharman Cup Premiership with an unbeaten record on six points. Ponsonby and Bay Roskill trail closely behind on four.

ARL results for Saturday May 27

SAS Fox Memorial: Round 8

Northcote 22 Mangere East 26
 Glenora 44 Richmond 10
 Te Atatu 6 Mt Albert 38
 Papakura 20 Marist 16
 Pt Chevalier 20 Howick 16

Crown Lift Trucks Sharman Cup Premiership: Round 3

Papatoetoe 32 New Lynn 32
 Manurewa 12 Otahuhu 42
 Otara 44 Ellerslie 6
 Ponsonby 24 Bay Roskill 12

Crown Lift Trucks Sharman Cup Plate: Round 3

Hibiscus Coast 24 Waitemata 24
 Pakuranga 30 Manukau 4
 East Coast Bays bye

Crown Lift Trucks Sharman Cup fixtures for Saturday June 3:

*Please note that the SAS Fox Memorial has a bye round this weekend**

Sharman Cup Premiership: Round 4

Otahuhu v Ponsonby @ Bert Henham Park 2.30pm

Ellerslie v Manurewa @ Ellerslie Domain 2.30pm

Papatoetoe v Bay Roskill @ Kohuora Park 2.30pm

New Lynn v Otara @ Lawson Park 2.30pm

Sharman Cup Plate: Round 4

East Coast Bays v Pakuranga @ Freyberg Park 2.30pm

Manukau v Waitemata @ Moyle Park 2.30pm

Hibiscus Coast bye

Southland Rugby League

By Dave Loudon



ABOVE ARE from a game played between Winton warlords RLC (Black Jerseys) and Cooks RLC. Played on 27.5.17 at Invercargill. Cooks took the win with 58 points to Wintons 18 points .



THESE ONES are from a game played between He Tauaa RLC (Blue Jerseys) and Lonestar Cowboys RLC. Played on 27.05.17 at Invercargill. He Tauaa took the win with 38 points against Cowboys 32 points - it was a very close game that could have gone either way.



OUR AUSTRALIAN correspondent Barry Ross caught up with Rugby League legend Graeme Langlands. The photo was taken before the NSWRL Hall of Fame Dinner at the Star Casino, Sydney on Monday night 22 May.





THIS WEEK IN BIG LEAGUE'S HUGE ROUND 13 ISSUE...

NRL, HOLDEN CUP, INTRUST SUPER PREMIERSHIP, INTRUST SUPER CUP AND RON MASSEY CUP TEAM LISTS, PREVIEWS AND STATS + SCORES AND RESULTS FROM AROUND THE COUNTRY!

INSIDE

- It's the mid-season review and *Big League* columnist **Michael Ennis** has some choice words for the **Bulldogs** – the team that has disappointed him the most so far this season. “At the moment there is so much uncertainty in the playing group in terms of where their future lies beyond this year, and in my opinion it's translated onto the field.”
- Questions of retirement have been thrown their way of **Paul Gallen**, **Luke Lewis** and **Chris Heighington** but Lewis says all three are battling to stay on at Cronulla – if the salary cap at The Shire allows for it.
- The ‘jinx’ on the Eels’ No.7 jersey is a long-held belief but legend **Brett Kenny** can see the light at the end of the tunnel for the club with their recruitment of **Mitchell Moses** – saying he and **Corey Norman** have the potential to play for their respective states and excel at Parra.
- Cowboys front-rower **John Asiata** knew he could handle the move to the halves in **Johnathan Thurston's** absence because the jack-of-all-trades is used to many different roles, spending his off-field time studying three courses, golfing, playing music, mentoring and being a husband and father-to-be.

PLUS... The **Top 8 unwanted records**, **The Analyst** runs the numbers on the Dragons and a **Suliasi Vunivalu** poster.



ROUND 13

On sale at newsagents, supermarkets and at the ground from

Thursday, June 1

DIGITAL VERSION

Available via magsonline.com.au

Through Apple Newsstand and Google Play

JOIN THE CONVERSATION

@bigleaguemag

bigleague@newslifemedia.com.au

Contact details

Editorial: maria.tsialis@news.com.au

Advertising: bowie.phillips@news.com.au

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.



DATE: FRIDAY, JUNE 2
VENUE: ANZ STADIUM
KICK-OFF: 7.50PM
REFEREE: ASHLEY KLEIN
ASSISTANT REFEREE: CHRIS SUTTON
TOUCH JUDGES: NICK BEASHEL & KASEY BADGER
SENIOR REVIEW OFFICIAL: BERNARD SUTTON
REVIEW OFFICIAL: BRYAN NORRIE
CHANNEL 9 & FOX LEAGUE: 7.30PM
LIVE RADIO: 2GB, ABC

P	T	G	PTS	#NRL Eels Warriors		P	T	G	PTS	
7	3	0	12	Bevan FRENCH	1	Roger TUIVASA-SHECK (C)	11	2	0	8
12	7	0	28	Semi RADRADRA	2	David FUSITU'A	12	8	0	32
9	1	0	4	Brad TAKAIRANGI	3	Blake AYSHFORD	9	1	0	4
7	2	0	8	Kirisme AUVA'A	4	Solomone KATA	9	1	0	4
12	3	0	12	Josh HOFFMAN	5	Ken MAUMALO	11	3	0	12
12	6	32	88	Clint GUTHERSON	6	Kieran FORAN	8	2	0	8
12	3	28	68	Mitch MOSES^	7	Shaun JOHNSON	12	4	31	78
12	0	0	0	Suaia MATAGI	8	James GAVET	9	2	0	8
12	1	0	4	Kaysa PRITCHARD	9	Issac LUKE	12	1	1	6
12	1	0	4	Tim MANNAH (C)	10	Ben MATULINO	5	1	0	4
12	1	0	4	Manu MA'U	11	Bodene THOMPSON	12	3	0	12
10	1	0	4	Tepai MOEROA	12	Ryan HOFFMAN	12	4	0	16
11	1	0	4	Nathan BROWN	13	Simon MANNERING	10	1	0	4

INTERCHANGE

11	1	0	4	Beau SCOTT (C)	14	Nathaniel ROACHE	5	0	0	0
11	0	0	0	Daniel ALVARO	15	Sam LISONE	12	0	0	0
5	0	0	0	Kenny EDWARDS	16	Albert VETE	4	0	0	0
9	1	0	4	Siosaia VAVE	17	Bunty AFOA	7	0	0	0

RESERVES

3	1	0	4	David GOWER	18	Jacob LILLYMAN	11	0	0	0
3	1	0	4	Will SMITH	19/20	Charnze NICOLL-KLOKSTAD	4	4	0	16
0	0	0	0	Marata NIUKORE	20/21	Toafofoa SIPLEY	0	0	0	0
0	0	0	0	Nathan DAVIS	21/22	Mafoa'aeta HINGANO	3	0	0	0

^Played 10 games for Wests Tigers

COACHES

Brant ARTHUR, Stephen KEARNEY

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

42 BIG LEAGUE 2017 Round 13

Courtesy of our friends at Big League Magazine

	EELS	WARRIORS
Position (Points)	9th (12)	11th (10)
Points For	220	216
Points Against	252	259

ATTACK		
Tries	39	38
Completions	77%	78%
Tries 0-20m	18	23
Tries 21-50m	9	5
Tries 51-100m	7	2

DEFENCE		
Tries	43	45
Tries 0-20m	19	15
Tries 21-50m	7	13
Tries 51-100m	5	5

MATCH AVERAGES		
Tries Scored	3	3
Tries Conceded	4	4
Points Scored	18	18
Points Conceded	21	22
Hit Ups/Runs	171	175
Tackles	320	314
Metres Gained	1540	1563
Handling Errors	5	4
Offloads	10	6
Line-breaks	4	4
Goalkicking	71%	74%

HEAD-TO-HEAD
 Played 37, Parramatta 20, Warriors 17

AT ANZ STADIUM
 First meeting

WINNING FORM 2017
PARRAMATTA: WLLLLLWVWLLW Streak - 1 win
WARRIORS: WLLWVWLLWLLW Streak - 1 win

PAST 8 CLASHES
2017 - WARRIORS D. PARRAMATTA 22-10 at Mt Smart Stadium
2016 - PARRAMATTA D. WARRIORS 40-18 at Mt Smart Stadium
2015 - WARRIORS D. PARRAMATTA 17-13 at Pirtek Stadium;
WARRIORS D. PARRAMATTA 29-16 at Mt Smart Stadium
2014 - WARRIORS D. PARRAMATTA 48-0 at Mt Smart Stadium;
PARRAMATTA D. WARRIORS 36-16 at Pirtek Stadium
2013 - PARRAMATTA D. WARRIORS 40-10 at Parramatta Stadium
2012 - WARRIORS D. PARRAMATTA 36-20 at Parramatta Stadium

BIGGEST HEAD-TO-HEAD WINS
PARRAMATTA D. WARRIORS 56-12 at Parramatta Stadium, 2001
WARRIORS D. PARRAMATTA 48-0 at Mt Smart Stadium, 2014

NEXT CLASH
PARRAMATTA: v North Qld at TIO (Darwin), 7pm Saturday June 10
WARRIORS: v Gold Coast at Cbus, 3pm Saturday June 10

CASUALTY WARD
PARRAMATTA: Matt Woods (shoulder) - Rd 15; Michael Jennings (quad) - Rd 16; Corey Norman (knee) - Rd 17; Frank Pritchard (foot) - Rd 18; Peni Terepo (pectoral) - Rd 22; Cody Nelson (hamstring), Isaac De Gois (concussion) - indefinite
WARRIORS: Manu Vatuvei (calf) - indefinite

NRL Preview

Eels heading in right direction

**ANZ Stadium
Friday, 7.50pm**

Form: The Eels played a tough, up-tempo game to overcome South Sydney last Friday and overturn a run of back-to-back losses to the Roosters and Raiders. The Warriors took advantage of Brisbane's Origin losses and the absence of injured hooker Andrew McCullough to claim their fifth win of the season and keep in touch with the leading pack.

History: The Eels hold a narrow lead in overall games played against the Warriors since 1995, but they've been far more dominant in games played in Australia, winning 11 of 16. This will be the first clash of these teams at ANZ Stadium, a venue that will be unfamiliar to the Warriors. They've played at the Olympic Stadium only once since the 2011 Grand Final, while five of their players have never appeared in an NRL game at the ground.
Danger sign: Chief threats for

the Eels will be fullback Bevan French, who crossed for a hat-trick in his only game against the Warriors (Rd 26, 2016), while winger Semi Radradra boasts the imposing strike rate at ANZ Stadium of 15 tries from 17 games.
Best Bet? Look for the Eels to maintain the Warriors' winless record in Australia for 2017 by claiming victory by 1-12 points.
Money-spinner: Options for First Tryscorer include Bevan French, Semi Radradra and David Fusitu'a.

by **DAVID MIDDLETON**
@Middleton_David



HOLDEN CUP

DATE: FRIDAY, JUNE 2 **VENUE:** ANZ STADIUM **KICK-OFF:** 5.35PM
REFEREE: DAMIEN BRADY
TOUCH JUDGES: JOE EID & PAT MACKAY

EELS V WARRIORS

Anthony LAYOUN	1	Lee TURNER
Haze DUNSTER	2	Lewis SOOSEMEA
Dylan CLIFFORD	3	Melino FINEANGANOFU
Noel AUKAFOLAU	4	Kane TELEA
John FONUA	5	Gibson POPOALII
Dean MATTERSON (C)	6	Paul TURNER
Troy DARGAN	7	Chanel HARRIS-TAVITA
Sean KEPPIE	8	Kenese KENESE (C)
Matt PRICE	9	Eiden ACKLAND
Tangi HOKAI	10	Taylher PAORA
Filia UTOIKAMANU	11	Tyler SLADE
Salesi FAINGAA	12	Joe VUNA
Denzal TONISE (C)	13	Chris SIO (C)
14 Reed MAHONEY	14 Dean KOUKA-SMITH	
15 Mitch BUTFIELD,	16 Beni VALU	
17 Oregon KAUFUSI	18 Frank SALU,	
18 Frank SALU,	19 Emosi ALAMOTI,	
20 Dom MURPHY	21 Austin DIAS,	
22 Ethan PARRY	23 Netane MASIMA	
Luke BURT	Grant POCKLINGTON	



KEN MAUMALO

11
tackle-breaks in Round 12

PHOTO: Anthony Au-Yeung/Getty Images

HEAD-TO-HEAD LEADERS

AVERAGE METRES	AVERAGE TACKLES	LINE-BREAKS	STATS
Roger Tuivasa-Sheck 180	Kaysa Pritchard 42	Clint Gutherson 8	
Ken Maumalo 154	Simon Mannering 42	Michael Jennings 8	
Jacob Lillyman 137	Bodene Thompson 31	Semi Radradra 8	
Semi Radradra 134	Issac Luke 31	David Fusitu'a 7	
Nathan Brown 128	Nathan Brown 29	Corey Norman 5	

NRL FANTASY

FANTASY POINTS	
Shaun Johnson	57.1
Simon Mannering	54.5
Corey Norman	50.9
Nathan Brown	44.2
Kieran Foran	42.3

NOT QUITE ENOUGH... The Eels suffered a narrow loss to the Rabbitohs in Round 12. Parramatta had the upper hand in defence in the first half with a 92.6 per cent effective tackle rate putting pressure on the Rabbitohs attack. They edged a comeback in the final 10 with Dean Matterson scoring the last try, but it wasn't enough.

FINALLY ON THE BOARD... It has taken 12 long weeks but the Warriors finally won a game in the Holden Cup. The early signs weren't good for the Warriors against Brisbane as they trailed by 12 at half-time, but after the break they scored three quick tries and sealed victory when Israel Ogden crossed. Halfback Chanel Harris-Tavita finished with two tries, three line-breaks and 111 running metres. **- KAMILIA HANNA**

Courtesy of our friends at Big League Magazine

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



Facebook



Instagram



Twitter

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

NO ADVERTS ARE PAID FOR IN THIS NEWSLETTER

At the Blues Game



At Eden Park supporting the Blues.



Four former All Blacks. Erin Clark, Michael Jones, Joe Vidiri, Junior Tonu'u.



The Blues are away this week in Apia, Samoa taking on the Reds. Kick off at 7.35pm NZ time.



Great to catch up with these two rugby legends. Ex All Black Sir John Kirwan, played 63 tests, and Jeremy Stanley son of ex All Black Joe Stanley.



With two rugby legends. Sir John Graham and Sir Graham Henry. Both wonderful gentlemen.



At lunch with the team from Ray White Real Estate, hosted by Carey Smith (CEO). With special guests Miles Davis and Leighton Smith. All in support of Prostate Cancer and the Westpac Rescue Helicopter.

Reader Mail



Hey Mum I am on TV thanks so much to the Mad Butcher for the tour around the grounds was so fantabstic.



Kevin Thorn talking to his grandson Archie Thorn about being a mighty Vodafone Warriors Supporter



Michele and Kevin Thorn we both have been involved in Haswell League for a very long time and have always been Warriors supporters and always will be.

Dear Sir Peter,

WE ARRIVED safely back in the UK and have now managed to sign up to a tv channel that allows us to watch the Warriors every week and we just watched them win against the Bronco's. Attached are a couple of photos of Janet and myself promoting the Warriors and showing off our jerseys.

The view behind us is the view from the top of our Island. Our very best regards to all the Warriors and supporters from your POMMIE mate

Bob McHugh- *Isle of Portland, UK*



Debbie and son Archie Thorn enjoying the game on Saturday night.



John and Wendy McElney from Tepuke never miss a game.



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