



Sir Peter Leitch's Mad Butcher Club

AT MT SMART STADIUM, HOME OF THE MIGHTY VODAFONE WARRIORS

Newsletter

12 March 2015
#63

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Well Done Breakers

Photos courtesy of www.photosport.co.nz



THE NZ Breakers know how to get your ticker working. The last second buzzer-beater that nailed their fourth ABL title was one of the best pieces of sporting theatre I have seen in a long time.

The Cairns Taipans went into the finals series as the favourites, but the Breakers did what few expected and beat them on their home court in game one, meaning they could wrap it up in Auckland with a second win in the three game series.

But Cairns fought hard and it was not until the final second that the winning shot went up, and I would defy anyone to name a more thrilling game of late. If you were watching, you must have been on the edge of your seat. It was utterly unbelievable.

The NZ Breakers Take Out Their 4th ANBL Title in 5 years

By John Deaker



THE NZ Breakers beat the Cairns Taipans 83-81 on Sunday night to seal their 4th ANBL title in 5 years - and the dramatic style with which they pulled off their latest Championship victory meant they were able to receive the sort of plaudits they deserve.

With Cricket's World Cup taking centre-stage and the Warriors' season kicking off at the weekend there was a chance the Breakers' moment of glory might not get the attention it deserved. Ekene Ibekwe had other plans though – and his stunning buzzer beater to close out the match ensured there was just as much excitement amongst players and fans after this win as there's been after many of their other title victories.

Importantly, wrapping the series up in 2 games meant the team could seal the victory over the Cairns Taipans on home turf where they were not only able to get better media coverage of their victory but they also get to celebrate in front of their passionate home crowd. The value of celebrating the win in front of their loyal fans shouldn't be lost. The Breakers' successful culture they've built up means they've become immensely important to New Zealand basketball. It can be strongly argued that the club's role has become even more important than that of the Tall Blacks to New Zealand basketball - and certainly they rival the Tall Blacks in the role of presenting the shop-window of NZ Basketball.

Last year the Tall Blacks head coach Nenad Vucinic emphasized how important the Breakers' role is. "The Breakers Academy has certainly been one of the main factors for our increase in quality player development in New Zealand," he said. "The fact that the Academy players can train with top level players throughout the year is the major factor."

It's clear that within particularly the Auckland area where the Breakers are based that they are very influential in getting young players in to basketball and also keeping them in the sport. Before the Breakers came along in 2003 people may have been more inclined to give the game up if they couldn't obtain a scholarship with an American University. Now there is not only the incentive of being involved with the Breakers but basketball is much more consistently discussed within communities and within the New Zealand media.

Any analysis of the clubs 4th title in 5 years should also include a look at how the club has made such huge strides since entering the ANBL for the first time back in the 2003/4 season. It's very easy to forget the lean years the team had ; It wasn't until Kirk Penney came on board in 2007/8 that the club made the playoffs for the first time. Last year's drop to seventh place in the league after pulling off the three-peat between 2011 and 2013 was a cruel reminder of those poor years the club had initially had.

The return of Cedric Jackson undoubtedly made a big difference this season ; Even the best coaches struggle to win titles without good cattle to work with. Coach Dean Vickerman was also able to prove he'd learnt from his first season in charge during the 2013/2014 season – and of course he showed that he'd learnt from Andrej Lemanis what it took to not only make a Final but win a Championship during the period when he'd assisted him to the three-peat.

Finding fresh motivation for next year might now be a challenge for Vickerman and his team. Winning is a habit though – and the Breakers culture has now been firmly established as one that expects success. Beating Australians at anything is something no New Zealander should ever take for granted. Maybe watching some of the local Blues' rugby games in the off-season will be enough of a reminder to everyone in the club that they should do everything they can to retain that winning habit - because the losing one is no fun for anyone. **Photos courtesy of www.photosport.co.nz**



Injury Disrupted Our Plans

BETTER to get your bad luck early I say. The Vodafone Warriors' plans were hampered by injury with fullback Sam Tomkins and would-be debutant wing Ken Maumalo ruled out by hamstringing injuries. Earlier in the week prop Sam Rapira also joined the injury list, and the game was only 15 minutes in when centre Konrad Hurrell went to the sideline with a leg injury, causing a major reshuffle.

Simon Mannering and Ben Henry both had to play in the centres and Solomone Kata, who had trained to start in the centres, pushed out to the wing.

That said, our debutant props Albert Vete and Sam Lisone went well in a very punishing outing.

Chad Townsend's 40-20 kick led to Thomas Leuluai scoring, but it was probably not one of Chad's better games.

Thomas copped a nasty head wound scoring the try, but he never stopped trying.

Tuimoala Lolohea, coming in for Tomkins, was brilliant in the first half and almost scored a sensational second half try, gassing some pretty quick Knights players along the way.

Manu Vatuvei made huge breaks and was sound all round, and I thought Nathan Friend was one of our best coming off the bench.

Ryan Hoffman didn't take long to get his name on the Warriors try-scorers list, and his fellow new recruit Bodene Thompson ran himself into the ground too.

If I'm honest, it was probably a case of rocks and diamonds for Shaun Johnson. Sometimes he was good, sometimes great, and at other times he did not have one for the highlights reel.

So my beloved Vodafone Warriors went down again. We have only ever won five opening day matches - disappointing.

The consensus seems to be that there were good signs on display though, with a fitter looking side showing some glimpses of really exciting footy. Let's hope so.

What can you say on the other hand about Souths? They won the grand final last year against the Bulldogs 30-6, came to Auckland and won the Nines 18-14 over the Sharks, went to England for the World Club Championship and smashed St Helens 39-0 and then demolished the Brisbane Broncos in round one 36-6. If that is not a team riding a wave of confidence I do not know what is. They are, in my humble opinion, the overwhelming favourites to win back-to-back titles this year.

The Roosters might have something to say about it, winning very well in North Queensland, putting the Cowboys to the sword 28-4, and Manly are never far off the pace either, although they were smashed by a resurgent Eels 42-12 in a result no one saw coming.

The Tigers beat the Titans 19-18 in the last minute of their game. I think the Titans did well when you consider all the problems lurking at that club. The Panthers beat the Bulldogs 24-18 and the Raiders got home 24-20 over the Sharks, which is all we need, because the Warriors next outing is of course in Canberra.

In the Monday night game a Josh Dugan ankle injury made it even worse for St George, beaten 12-4 by Melbourne.

Team Announced

Jonathan Wright will make his club debut and Sam Tomkins is back from injury in two changes for the Vodafone Warriors' encounter with the Raiders in Canberra on Sunday (8.30pm NZT).

Wright is named on the right wing and Tomkins is back at fullback.

The selection sees Tuimoala Lolohea being switched to the centres for the injured Konrad Hurrell, where he will partner Solomone Kata.

Utility Ben Henry reverts to the interchange bench along with veteran hooker Nathan Friend and rookie props Sam Lisone and Albert Vete. Dropping out of the squad is prop Suaia Matagi with ex-Canberra outside back Matt Allwood named 18th man.

Wright, who was completing a three-game suspension last week, is set to become the third of the major recruits to make his club debut as Vodafone Warrior No 198. He was signed in December after amassing 91 appearances for the Eels, Bulldogs and Sharks since his debut in 2009.

Vodafone Warriors assistant coach Tony Iro said Hurrell was still in a lot of discomfort from the left knee injury he received in the Newcastle contest.

The Vodafone Warriors will start with the same pack used against the Knights, a combination packed with experience.

Continued on next page...

Captain Simon Mannering will be playing his 214th NRL match, second rower Ryan Hoffman his 247th, prop Jacob Lillyman his 188th and fellow front rower Ben Matulino his 154th.

Hooker Thomas Leuluai has played almost 300 games in the NRL and Super League combined, while second rower Bodene Thompson plays his 87th match this weekend.

Friend takes his tally to 199, leaving him in line to achieve his 200th milestone in our first home game of the year at Mt Smart on March 21 against Parramatta (5pm kick-off).

Team: Tomkins, Wright, Lolohea, Kata, Townsend, Johnson, Lillyman, Leuluai, Matulino, Thompson, Hoffman, Mannering. Bench: Friend, Henry, Lisone, Vete. 18th man Allwood.

Cappy Talks to the Herald

Interesting to read coach Andrew McFadden's take on things in the NZ Herald, which said he had stressed the need for a good performance, so the result would look after itself.

"We overplayed our hand and went for the kill but we didn't need to. We needed to be measured but we went for the big knockout blow, made errors and allowed them to get back into it. If we had been a bit smarter we would have got away with that one."

Says it all really, and he did not hold back on criticising his players either. "Shaun was obviously disappointing. In the big moments at the end he needed to come up with a bit better. There were certain individuals that missed their

assignments ... especially when we needed it."

NSW Cup Side Gets the Job Done

Our old friend Stacey Jones tasted success in his New South Wales Cup coaching debut as the Vodafone Warriors beat Newcastle 26-18.

There was never more than six points in the contest until we stretched our lead to eight in the final stages.

We led 12-6 at the break but in the opening stages of the second half the Knights enjoyed a flow of penalties to dominate.

The upshot was two tries that enabled Newcastle to go out to an 18-12 lead.

The Vodafone Warriors were patient though and a three-try winning surge took life.

Newcastle Knights 18 Vodafone Warriors 26:

James Bell, Matt Allwood, Viliami Kaveinga, Sione Lousi, ApiPewhairangi tries; Api Pewhairangi 2 conversions; Sam Cook conversion.

Juniors Get a Hiding

After battling with the Knights in the first half, the Vodafone Junior Warriors were heavily outpointed in the second half of their opening NYC clash, eventually losing 41-16.

Tomas Aoake, Ata Hingano and Jazz Tevaga crossed for the boys, who will be pretty disappointed after that one.

Have your say about Mt Smart

There has been lots of talk about our future at Mt Smart so it's time we stood up and were counted. You can make a submission to Auckland Council, which has been running a consultation process on its 10-year budget, and which closes at 4pm on Monday, March 16.

The Vodafone Warriors have made a submission relating to: "Investing in QBE (North Harbour), Western Springs and Mt Smart to support the Auckland Stadium Strategy". Their submission supports Mt Smart as the Vodafone Warriors' home.

Vodafone Warriors managing director Jim Doyle said time is running out. "We'd urge members and fans to join us and have their say. For us Mt Smart is our rightful home and we want to keep it."

To be heard, go online at Shape Auckland, or fill out the form provided and send it to the freepost address supplied on the site. You can scan it and email to : longtermplan@aucklandcouncil.govt.nz

You can get the forms in council service centres, local board offices and libraries.

You can read the Vodafone Warriors' submission by clicking on the link below.

<http://bit.ly/1E4qcub>

Check This Out!

You know you have really made it when you make the front page of Pakuranga College's paper! Great little article by Te Haua Taua about what it meant for a nice young man who is a big fan of the Warriors to be at the Papakura trial.

<http://bit.ly/1Gq72Bm>

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Tickets on Offer

If you are already straight back into your league, and fancy going to Melbourne to see NSW v Queensland in the State of Origin, then don't be a mug and forget to enter, because I am giving away three sets of double tickets to the game. But remember, it's tickets to the game only, getting there is up to you.

Poor Sir JK

Spare a thought for Sir John Kirwan and his Auckland Blues.

Last week there was all sorts of speculation about him getting the chop and every commentator said his side would have to beat the Lions. They didn't.

Poor JK, who is a marvellous bloke, can expect more of the same, and his seat must, no matter what he says, be a hot one at the moment.

It can't be easy knowing you have to go to Palmerston North next and face the high-flying Hurricanes.

Sport is a fickle business.

Parker Joins 300 Club

Brisbane Broncos forward Corey Parker became the 22nd player to play 300 NRL matches when he took the field against South Sydney. Parker was presented with the match ball after the round-one clash at Suncorp.

Corey made 300 and even more impressively, with the one club. Of course he has also played representative football too.

The list of players in the 300 Club

is like reading a who's who of our game.

It's led by Darren Lockyer on 355 games for Brisbane, and has names like Terry Lamb, Andrew Ettingshausen, Hazem El Masri and of course our own Steve Price and Ruben Wiki.

Top Job to Top Bloke

Brent Gemmell has been appointed as NZ Rugby League high performance general manager.

Gemmell is probably best known for guiding the Junior Kiwis to an emotional 15-14 victory over Australia last October.

But he has a long and distinguished coaching history that also includes stints with NZ Residents,

Auckland Vulcans in NSW Cup, four national titles with Auckland Pride/Lions and two Fox Memorial titles with Auckland powerhouse club Mt Albert.

His considerable experience coaching at age-group level has also seen him play a hand in guiding some of New Zealand's leading players through their early careers. He will take office on April 13.



Brent Gemmell

Jillaroos Bring In Four New Faces

Four newcomers have been included in a preliminary Australian Jillaroos squad ahead of their test against the Kiwi Ferns in May. Indigenous All Stars players Latoya Billy, Casey Karklis, Mahalia Murphy, and Tallisha Harden will join the Jillaroos for the first time when a 21-strong squad goes into camp at the end of the month.

A final squad of 18 will then be selected for the test on May 1 at Brisbane's Suncorp Stadium, in the curtain-raiser for the 2015 Anzac Test between the Kangaroos and Kiwis.

Frances is a Legend

Frances Wharepapa, a tireless voluntary club worker at Southland's He Tauaa Rugby League Club has been named a Southland Times Legend of Sport.

I love it when the little people of our game are recognised, because they do extraordinary things, and after reading Frances' story, I can tell you that few do more for our game.

You can check out what the paper had to say by clicking on the link.

<http://bit.ly/1D2Rp5r>

Anzac Test Tickets Rolled Out This Week

ANZAC Test tickets go on sale this week, with tickets on sale to the general public on March 12.

To purchase tickets you have to visit <http://www.ticketek.com.au>

DTR are Giving you a Chance to Train with the Warriors

WE'RE giving all rugby league teams under the age of 16 the chance to win an awesome training session with the Vodafone Warriors!

This epic day will be held at the home of the Vodafone Warriors, Mt Smart Stadium in Auckland and will include a tour of the facilities and the players' gym. Afterwards you'll hit the pitch with players and coaches for an on-field training session.

The competition is open to all rugby league teams under the age of 16 in New Zealand. Flights and accommodation are included for teams outside of Auckland. Teams must be available to travel in June or July 2015.

Nominate your team now at www.dtr.co.nz/training-session, then head on down to your nearest DTR to vote. Team with the most votes as of 5pm 15th May wins the competition.

Terms and Conditions apply. Please see in store or www.dtr.co.nz for more details. Voting closes at 5pm on 15th May 2015.

TRAIN WITH THE VODAFONE WARRIORS

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Terms and Conditions apply.
Please see in store or www.dtr.co.nz for more details.
Voting closes at 5pm on 15th May 20



Boxing Tickets Winner

Hi Sir Peter,

Just sending you a big THANK YOU for the tickets to the boxing last night.

We had a great night & it was great to see the future heavy weight champion of the world in the flesh doing the business.

Thanks again. You're a Legend.

Cheers Jason
Papamoa Beach
Tauranga



Here are The Rugby League Shows on Sky TV

NRL

Monday: Monday night with Matty Johns

Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday: NRL 360

Wednesday: Sterlo on the Couch

Thursday: Big Weekend with Matty Johns
The After Match – follows every Warriors game

Thursday: The Footy Show

The Sunday Footy show precedes all the Sunday action.

Super League:

Boots n'all and Super League Fulltime

Note: For up to date schedules and daily changes go to [facebook.com/skysportnz](https://www.facebook.com/skysportnz)



Vodafone customer?

Get 2 for 1 tickets to see the Vodafone Warriors take on the Eels.
Saturday 21 March 2015 at Mt Smart Stadium

Find out more at www.vodafone.co.nz/ff-sports/





THIS WEEK IN BIG LEAGUE'S ROUND 2 ISSUE...

We sit down with some of the game's biggest personalities and find out their story, while exploring this season's biggest threats

FEATURES

- **South Sydney** have all comers nervous in 2015 and rightly so. As Fox Sports' Matty Johns points out, the addition of Glenn Stewart has made them a greater attacking danger and they now have more ball-players alongside their big runners;
- **Frank-Paul Nuausala** was in his comfort zone at the Sydney Roosters, but he's exciting about taking on a leadership role at Canberra and bringing success to the nation's capital;
- **Frank Pritchard and Sam Kasiano** form a formidable team on-field and off the field they are just like family. And don't believe the rumours, they're happy at Belmore;
- **Brett Stewart** may polarise fans' opinion but he does plenty of good work off the field that often goes unheralded. One of the few professional athletes managing diabetes, his work with young kids battling the disease is helping change their lives;
- **James Tedesco** has his sights set on an injury-free season and he's looking forward to the Wests Tigers' first home game on his old stomping ground of Campbelltown Stadium – and he hopes the club's youngsters can help move the joint venture past the bickering and into the future.

PLUS... **Greg Alexander** feels for Geoff and wonders where the balance of power should rest for a head coach; **Matt Elliott** casts his eyes over those players at new clubs this year and how the seachange may affect their football; **Nathan Brown** analyses the Round 1 performances and who impressed and who disappointed and gives his predictions for his Round 2 winners.

AND: Official team lists, Warren Smith's Big Clash preview of Rabbitohs v Roosters, lower grade reviews, Top 8 Unbeatable Records, news: Penrith want every club to hit the road, Gagai on clubs' radars, Ricky's influence on Josh Papalii; and poster of the game's 300 club.



THIS WEEK'S ISSUE

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NEWSLIFEMEDIA

Woodstock Woody Words of Wisdom

WOODSTOCK Bourbon and Cola to provide platform for fans to stand shoulder to shoulder with the Vodafone Warriors.

Vodafone Warriors, Woodstock, NZ's #1 bourbon and cola will be giving fans the opportunity to support their team and write their messages of support through the 'Woody Words of Wisdom' promotion at all Warriors home games.

"After the phenomenal success of the 'Woody Words of Wisdom' at the NRL Auckland Nines, where over 15,000 Woodstock signs were distributed to fans to write their messages of support for the team, we have decided to roll this promotion out for all home games for the 2015 season" says Laura Youngman Senior Brand Manager for Woodstock.

"The Vodafone Warriors have some of the most loyal fans in the country and many of their signs and banners have gone viral in the past. Woodstock is determined to help fans have even more fun at home games and the 'Woody Words of Wisdom' signs will help fans show their pride and passion for the Vodafone Warriors, in their 20th year anniversary season" she says.

The best sign at each home game will earn the winner \$1,000 and the chance to win a trip for them and 3 mates to the end game of 2015.

"The 'Woody Words of Wisdom' signs didn't go unnoticed with the boys on the field at the NRL Auckland Nines, and it gives them that little bit extra knowing that New Zealand is standing shoulder to shoulder with them every step of the way" says Vodafone Warriors CEO Jim Doyle.

The multi-year sponsorship deal will see Woodstock secure jersey branding as well as in ground signage joint promotions, and pourage rights at all 11 Vodafone Warriors home game matches.

*Woodstock is NZ's number 1 bourbon and cola Colmar Brunton October 2014

For Enquiries please contact: Laura Youngman 021 242 3084, lauray@independentliquor.co.nz



James and Haidee Tie the Knot

James and Haidee (long time members of the Mad Butcher Club in the Stacey Jones lounge) got married on Saturday 7th March at beautiful Pataua North, just outside Whangarei. It was an amazing day, with awesome weather, and they couldn't be happier how it all turned out. They are now on a short "mini moon" in Queenstown for a few days but will be back for the Vodafone Warriors first home game of the season against the Eels as MR and MRS THOMPSON. Congrats!



Win Tickets 1 of 3x Double Passes to State of Origin II

Game Details:

State of Origin II
VB NSW Blues
vs
XXXX QLD Maroons
Wed 17 June 8:00pm (Local)
Melbourne Cricket Ground

To be into win 1 of 3x Double passes to the NSW Blues vs QLD Maroons* (game tickets only) just send a stamped, addressed envelope or postcard to me in the mail with your name, address and phone number on the back to the address below.

Win State of Origin Tickets
P.O Box 54295
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*Competition is for game tickets only

Drawn on
Monday 23rd March

Another Milestone for Manu

By John Coffey QSM



HAVING overtaken Nigel Vagana as New Zealand's leading test try-scorer in the 2014 Four Nations final, Warriors wing Manu Vatuvei is now poised to become our most prolific try-scorer in Australian first-grade football.

Once again it is Vagana who is hearing the footsteps. Nifty Nigel scored 37 tries for the Warriors, 61 for the Bulldogs, 32 for the Sharks and another 10 for the Rabbitohs during his career for 140 overall.

Vatuvei is on 135, all with the Warriors. At his current strike rate, and provided he stays injury-free, he should be tilting at 150 before the end of the season.

The two Vs are the sole New Zealanders who have exceeded a century of tries in the NRL and its predecessor, the Winfield Cup. Sean Hoppe scored 81 (Raiders 22, Norths 15 and Warriors 44), while Stacey Jones crossed 77 times for the Warriors.

But none of them can lay claim to being the premier New Zealand try-scorer in all professional league over the last 20 years. That distinction belongs to Francis Meli, with 60 for the Warriors and 145 for St Helens.

Vagana can add 17 tries during a season with Warrington to boost his haul to 157, and Hoppe's 36 for St Helens take his total to 117.

Of those, Vatuvei, Meli and Hoppe were regarded as specialist wings, so were often the recipients of excellent ground work by the men inside them.

So it is all the more credit to Vagana, who plied his trade in the centres, that he features on lists of leading try-scorers. There are no statistics for how many tries his skills created for the wings outside him, but you can be sure that was also in triple figures.

Leading try-scorers for the Kiwis and Warriors are:

Kiwis test match tries: Manu Vatuvei 20, Nigel Vagana 19, Sean Hoppe 17.

Warriors: Manu Vatuvei 135, Stacey Jones 77, Francis Meli 60.

Oops: In last week's newsletter John Coffey's story on league before the advent of the Warriors in 1994 was incorrectly attributed to John Deaker.

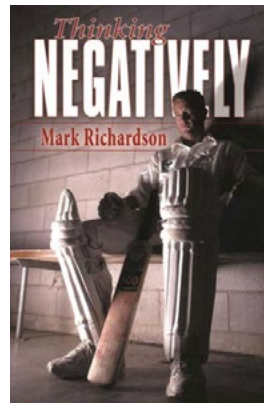
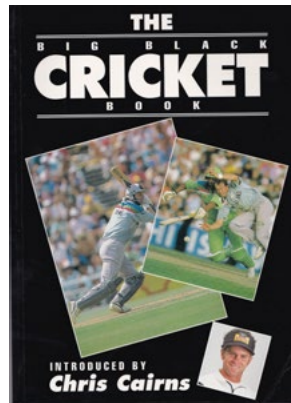
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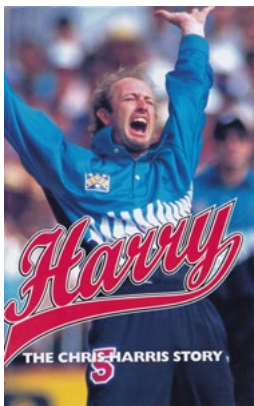
Big Cricket Books Giveaway

To celebrate the Black Caps success in the World Cup so far we are giving away 9 great cricket related books.

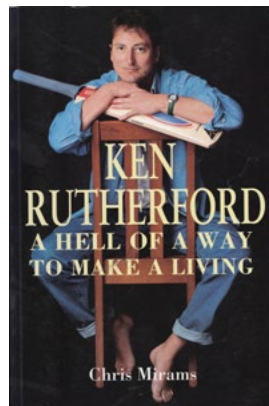
Big Black Cricket Book



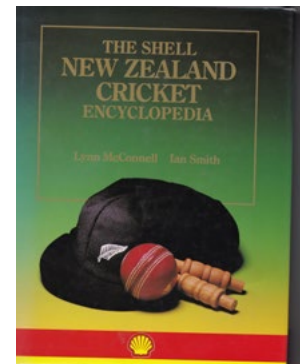
Thinking Negatively - Mark Richardson, Co Host of the Crowd Goes Wild, Radio Sport commentator and host of the Block NZ.



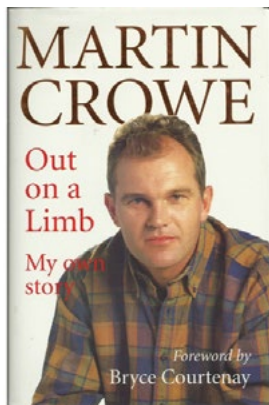
The Chris Harris Story



Ken Rutherford - Chris Mirams



Shell NZ Cricket Encyclopedia



Out on a Limb - Martin Crowe



The History of New Zealand Test Cricket



2x Daniel Vettori, Turning Point - Richard Boock

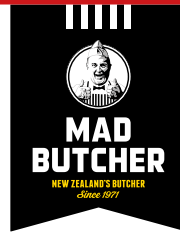
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The Marina 2144, Manukau, Auckland

Drawn on
Monday 23rd March

SPECIAL PREVIEW just for you - before we release this to the public.

GLENGARRY



Present

KIWIS LUNCHEON

Friday **12** June at Ellerslie Events Centre

Confirmed Ex Kiwis Attending

Kevin Tamati, James Leuluai, Murray Eade, Ray Cranch, Gary Prohm, Howie Tamati, Peter Rakich, Dean Bell, Tony Coll, Don Hammond, Ruben Wiki, Michael Patton, Mark Bourneville, Dean Lonergan, Stacey Jones, Brian McClennan, Gordon Smith, Graham West, Lindsay Proctor, Graham Lowe - Ex Coach, Bluey McClennan - Ex Coach, Tom McKeown - Ex Manager, Gordon Gibbons - Ex Manager and Mark Graham - NZRL Player of the Century

How often have you thought of coming to a Vodafone Warriors game but live outside of Auckland? We have a deal for you.

On Friday the 12th of June we are having a luncheon and the next day the Vodafone Warriors play the Roosters at Mt Smart. If you book for the luncheon, we will give you a ticket to the game for only **\$25** instead of \$50. Plus give you a free tour of Mt Smart Stadium. **So don't delay book now to get cheap flights.**

Our special guest for the Luncheon will be **Mark Graham**. Mark is the **NZRL player of the century**. We are flying him to the luncheon from Gladstone in Australia. Mark will be interviewed by Richard Becht during the luncheon.

We also have **Jim Doyle** (CEO of the Vodafone Warriors) and **Andrew McFadden** (head coach Vodafone Warriors) speaking at the luncheon.

For out of town guests I have got a fantastic special price for accommodation at the **Ibis** hotel in **Greenlane**. For **\$119** a room including

breakfast (be quick they only have **10 rooms available** - U20 Fifa World Cup is on in Auckland that weekend too).

To book ring the Ibis hotel on **09 529 9090** and mention the name **Mad Butcher** to get this deal.

SkyCity Hotel are also offering a fantastic deal:

- Premium Rooms \$199.00 (Rate includes 1 x breakfast at Fortuna and GST)
- Premium Suite \$359.00 (Rate includes 1 x breakfast at Fortuna and GST)

Please email hotel.reservations@skycity.co.nz to make bookings and quote **BUTCHER** to access this deal.

You will need to be quick for this fantastic deal before I open it up to the public. This deal will go quicker than a Mad Butcher BBQ!



Special Guest
Mark Graham
NZRL Player of the Century

The price for this luncheon is \$100 and includes; buffet lunch and complimentary drinks between 11.30am and 2.00pm

To book a place for the luncheon,

Email:

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Please say in the email if you also wish to purchase Warriors tickets.

Peter Yaxley - Rest in Peace

By John Coffey QSM



PETER YAXLEY, one of Canterbury league's great all-rounders, died last week at 86 after serving the sport as a player, ref and administrator for more than 60 years.

An inside back, he was a stand-out performer in the Sydenham teams that won the Canterbury championship from 1953 to 1956, and beat the West Coast for the Thacker Shield in 1955 and 1956.

They were a tough crew, boasting a rugged forward pack with West Coast expats Jock Butterfield and Trevor Kilkelly, who had moved to Sydenham. That pair were first selected for the Kiwis from Sydenham before moving back to their West Coast home club, Brunner. After nearly 50 test appearances between them, both finished their careers at Manly-Warringah.

Peter Yaxley also wore the red-and-black of Canterbury, the highlight of his rep career an 18-18 draw with Auckland at Carlaw Park in 1955, where he marked Kiwis utility back Bill Sorensen at stand-off.

No sooner had he retired from playing than Peter enlisted with the referees. The pinnacle of his career was the second test of Gt Britain's 1974 tour at Addington. That appointment was an achievement because Auckland's John Percival virtually had sole rights to tests in those days.

Peter also controlled matches involving national teams from Australia, France and South Africa, as well as numerous inter-provincial fixtures. He refereed the first nine Canterbury club grand finals from their introduction in 1967, a record that will probably never be equalled.

Peter never favoured Sydenham with his whistle but he certainly gave his old club exceptional service as an administrator, being a life-member and former long-serving president.

He spent almost 20 years on the Canterbury Rugby League board of control and 12 years as Otago's delegate to the New Zealand Schoolboy Council when it was based in Christchurch. Peter was made a Canterbury Rugby League life-member in 1981.



That's Peter on the right with his friend and fellow Canterbury Referees Life Member Tony Drake at a seminar in Dunedin.

Kiwi Passes On

THE 1955-60 Kiwi Keith Roberts has died. Keith came from Kaiapoi Rugby Union with the late Ean Anderson in 1953, joining Marist, after being spotted by Bill McKenzie, playing third grade. He toured Britain and France in 1955/56 (three tests), toured Australia in 1956, played two tests against GB in NZ in 1958, toured Australia in 1959 (three tests) and played against France in 1960 (two tests). He also played in three games at the 1960 World Cup. He played 35 games for NZ and selected for NZ Maori in 1956, but withdrew. He joined Papanui in 1957, one of five Kiwis to do so.

Our sympathies to his family - South Island Kiwis Association and the Rugby League Family

Photos from Readers

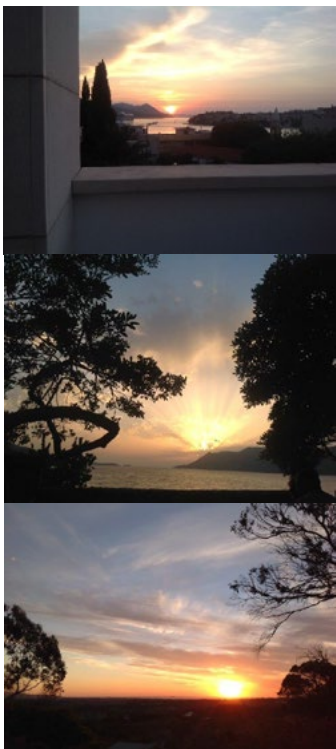
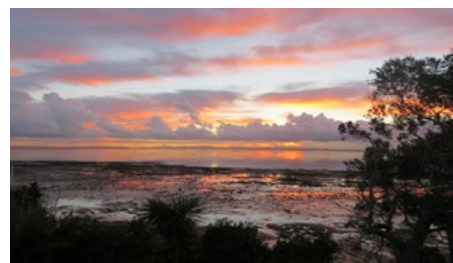
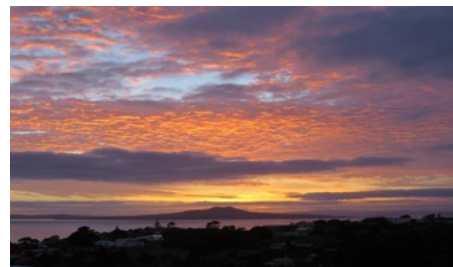


Photo from Tony's Croatian holiday.



Nick from Panasonic sent in two pics. He caught this snapper off Waiheke over Christmas and the second is him with King Wally as his nickname is Wally also.



Morning photo looking out over Rangitoto from our deck. Gannet Point in Browns Bay. And the next one is taken at the Weymouth Rugby Club at sunset.
From Budd Abbott

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

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Here is the team that help me make the newsletter each week. Between us we make the newsletter happen - and like everything it's a team effort.



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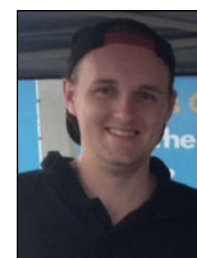
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