



Sir Peter Leitch's Mad Butcher Club

AT MT SMART STADIUM, HOME OF THE MIGHTY VODAFONE WARRIORS

Newsletter 19 March 2015 #64

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Simon Mannering leads out the Vodafone Warriors.



Chad Townsend runs past Blake Austin.



Ryan Hoffman goes in to score.



A Vodafone Warriors fan showing their support for the boys.



Shaun Johnson goes around Jarrod Croker.



Nathan Friend tackles Sisa Waqa.

I REALLY wanted to watch the Vodafone Warriors up against Canberra, who were coming off a good first round win and brimming with confidence.

Like a lot of you, I'll admit I was already desperate for a win.

Even the commentators admitted that they did not know what to expect, but it was a second game of incredible intensity made even better by our boys taking the win 18-6.

Captain Simon Mannering was magnificent, making more than 50 tackles, including more than one try-saving lunge.

Fullback Sam Tomkins returned to the side after injury and was great, chiming into the attack regularly and having one of his best games for the club, but the man of the match went to a quiet bloke who just gets about his business, Ben Matulino.

He made metre after metre and was enormous in the middle of the park.

Photos courtesy of
www.photosport.co.nz

Good Skills On Show

NO point denying it, but there was plenty of disappointment after our Round One loss to the Knights, even though there were some good signs. So it was great to see some really powerful performances against Canberra.

- Solomone Kata crossed for his first try in the big leagues
- Two chances in the early minutes of the second half, both taken
- Ryan Hoffman, two games, two tries plus 179 metres from 21 runs, 22 tackles
- Manu Vatuvei's career try total out to 136 in 196 appearances, plus 167 metres from 18 runs
- Ben Matulino man of the match award - 19 runs, 181 metres, two off-loads, 22 tackles
- Sam Tomkins carried 17 times for 157 metres, two try assists and 10 tackles
- Jonathan Wright debuts with 156 metres from 18 carries
- Bodene Thompson with 41 tackles
- Simon Mannering's 53 tackles plus 117 metres from 13 runs.

Stuart Blames Errors

Canberra coach Ricky Stuart blamed two errors after half-time for his side's loss.

Raiders forward Paul Vaughan dropped a pass from the kick-off to gift the Warriors territory, which they converted into six points through Solomone Kata's first NRL try.

Another mistake minutes later gave the Warriors another crack and Ryan Hoffman scored.

"We're all disappointed with the loss, but I'll never be disappointed with their attitude," Stuart said. "We were exactly where we wanted to be at half-time but two errors in the first five minutes loses the game. And that's the competition we're in."

Manu Loves The Raiders

Vodafone Warriors winger Manu Vatuvei continued his strong form against the Raiders by notching up his 13th try against them in six games, when he opened the scoring in the first half on Sunday.

"Slamming" Sam Rapira will leave the Vodafone Warriors at the end of the season to play in the English Super League.

Now in his 10th NRL season, Sam has played more games at prop for us than anyone else, played in

the 2011 NRL grand final and was also in the Kiwis' Rugby League World Cup-winning side in 2008.



"It was tough to tell the boys but I know it's time for me to move on," he said. "The Vodafone Warriors have been a massive part of my life. It was a hard decision but I'm pleased to have the next stage of my career sorted."

Vodafone Warriors head coach Andrew McFadden lauded Rapira's contribution. "Sam is a terrific person and a fantastic team man who encompasses all the values we seek in our players. He stands out as one of our leaders, a steadying influence and a rock-solid per-

former who never gives less than everything he has."

Sam has been out with a hamstring injury but is set to be only the seventh Vodafone Warrior to play in 10 NRL seasons for the club. And can I say I will miss him.

He is a top bloke and a very good professional. All you can really ask is that a player always gives 100 per cent, and Sam certainly did that.

Bunnies March On

Some great league was played on Sunday. The Bunnies, reigning premiers, met their arch-rivals the Roosters and it was a quality game that had it all.

Everyone knows the Vodafone Warriors are my team but I have to confess I have fallen under Souths' spell. They have not been beaten since taking out the grand final last year but they had to work incredibly hard to get past the Roosters 34-26.

The two sides are one and two with the bookmakers to win the title, and Sunday's match would not have disgraced a winner-take-all final.

Looks Like Being A Close Year

What have the Dogs, Broncos, Manly and the Warriors got in common?

They were all first round losers, and all second round winners.

I know it is only a few weeks in, but that has already squashed the table up, with only Penrith, Newcastle, the Tigers and the Bunnies two from two at the top.

Triple-header at Mt Smart

Coach Andrew McFadden will be relieved to have two points under his belt as we get ready for the first home game of the season when the Parramatta Eels come to Mt Smart on Saturday.

The big game at 5pm will be the climax of a triple-header that starts at 12.40pm when the Vodafone Junior Warriors, who had a great win over Canberra at the weekend, take the field.

They are coached by Kelvin Wright, who has coached at Otara, Bay Roskill and been assistant to the Junior Kiwis, and the Juniors last year.

Then at 2.10pm the Stacy Jones coached New South Wales Cup team will be out to make amends after going down at the weekend despite a try to 37-year-old George Carmont, who wasn't even going to play this year. There is life in the old dog yet!

Pack the park

So let's hope we can pack the park for this one. Three games for the price of one, and our chance to really make statement and lay down a marker at our home venue.

It's not too late to get tickets. You can visit www.ticketek.co.nz or better still, become a member by visiting www.warriorsforever.co.nz, where there are several great deals on offer.

Your Chance to Win Unique Experiences

Don't forget that this season Vodafone Warriors members have even more benefits on game day. All the benefits will be given to

members at each home game year. If you want to win one of these opportunities simply register by clicking on the links. Once you are registered you will go into the draw each week.

Member coin toss: A lucky member will get to meet both NRL team captains and complete the coin toss for the NRL fixture on the field.

[REGISTER](#)

Member upgrade: Two members will get upgraded to the Legends Lounge for the game, hosted by Monty Betham. There is a private cash bar and food facilities.

Member guard of honour: 20 members will have the opportunity to line the tunnel for the NRL team run out. Be there to high rev the boys as they run out.

[REGISTER](#)

Post match meet the team: Two members get the opportunity to mix and mingle with the team in the gym after the game. This one is new to 2015!

[REGISTER](#)

*Winners will be announced by Thursday before the game so be sure to enter to be in the draw. Once you have entered you are in the draw for the season. You are limited to one entry per seat and winners will be chosen at random.

Juniors Get First Win

First-year coach Kelvin Wright savoured a breakthrough win when the Vodafone Junior Warriors won 44-24 at Canberra.

After a 41-16 first up flogging at the hands of Newcastle, it was a welcome result that saw the defending NYC premiers rebound

with an eight-try spree.

They were on song from the start, scoring early through second rower Matiu Love-Henry, and while Canberra came back with a reply, it was all us for the rest of the first half, with Sheldon Pitama, Erin Clark, Ata Hingano and captain Nathaniel Roache all crossing.

With Hingano converting four, the Vodafone Junior Warriors were in charge 28-4 at the break.

They conceded an early second half try but went out to a 34-10 when prop Bunty Afoa scored.

The Raiders came up with a two-try strike before Afoa's second try made the result safe, and while Canberra scored again, the Juniors iced the cake with another try to Love-Henry right on full-time.

With his try and six conversions, Hingano accounted for 16 points.

NSW Cup Side Beaten

Assistant coach George Carmont made a dramatic try-scoring comeback in the Vodafone Warriors' second round NSW Cup loss to the Bulldogs in Sydney.

The Bulldogs held on to win 26-18 but the story of the match was the return of former Samoa, Newcastle and Wigan centre Carmont, who turns 37 in June.

After ending his Super League days with Wigan at the end of the 2012, he was intent on retirement.

Continued on page 5...



THIS WEEK IN BIG LEAGUE'S ROUND 3 ISSUE...

Robbie Farah has chat about all the drama that unfolded at the end of 2014 and we try to clear up all the controversy about contract negotiations

FEATURES

- **Robbie Farah** had a rough run at the end of last year to the point that he sought counselling, but he found solace in a new arrival at the Wests Tigers and is excited about the future at the club;
- **Contracts!** It's the buzz word at the moment so we spoke with Sam Ayoub and Allan Gainey as well as Panthers recruitment man Jim Jones about what goes into negotiating a contract and the amount of planning needed to get these deals over the line;
- **Melbourne Storm** have made a name for themselves by being able to stay ahead of the pack and we discovered they tested some revolutionary training techniques this pre-season;
- **Ryan Hoffman** may have spent his entire NRL career up to this season at Melbourne but he has fond memories of when the Warriors first entered the competition and is ready to impart his winning ways onto the club;
- **Play NRL** round honours tomorrow's stars and the people that help them get there so we asked some of the games top players about their memories of their junior rugby league days.

PLUS... **Ben Hunt** reckons Anthony Milford has the potential to be a Broncos' great; **Matt Elliott** takes a look at the different affects drawn out contract negotiations can have on a player; **Nathan Brown** analyses the the good, bad and ugly of Round 2 and flags who he thinks will be crucial in each match this weekend.

AND: Official team lists, Warren Smith's Big Clash preview of Roosters v Panthers, lower grade reviews, Top 8 Junior Club representation, News: Manly's open cheque book, Bennett's cracking the whip, Sterlo's assessment of the Foran signing, Jennings learning from his brother; and Canberra team poster.



THIS WEEK'S ISSUE

On sale at newsagents, supermarkets and at the ground from

Thursday, March 19.

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Continued from page 3...

Carmont made 83 NRL appearances for Newcastle and 154 for Wigan, scoring 113 tries in total. He also represented Toa Samoa. And he came into a reshuffled NSW Cup line-up at the weekend after Jarrod Tua, named in the centres, moved to the wing.

After conceding an early try, the Vodafone Warriors recovered through an Upu Poching try and Api Pewhairangi's conversion to lead 6-4.

They fell behind again but Pewhairangi scored and converted for a 12-8 halftime lead.

Once more the Bulldogs edged ahead 14-12 before Carmont scored a try that handed his side the lead yet again, Pewhairangi's conversion making it 18-14.

There was to be no fairytale ending, though, with the Bulldogs hitting the front 20-18 and crossing in the final moments for a 26-18 victory.

Black Caps Get the Windies

Of course my best wishes go to the Black Caps ahead of their quarter-final against the West Indies in the Cricket World Cup. All the experts are saying we should get home in this one but I am one of the nervous ones who just hope Chris Gayle does not decide to have one of his magnificent innings, because when that guy cuts loose he makes our master-blaster Brendon McCullum look like slow.



Kiwis Lead the Aussies

And a plug to the Wellington Phoenix, 2-1 winners over the Perth Glory, and top of the Aussie football competition. A great result and I admire any Kiwi team that can lead an Australian competition, and to be frank, while I am no soccer expert, the style of football they now play has much to recommend it.



ANZ Stadium Rail Deal Announced

NRL members and fans can enjoy train travel with pre-purchased tickets to all regular season games at ANZ Stadium during the 2015 season, after the NRL confirmed a deal with Transport for NSW and Sydney Trains.

The deal includes transport for NRL club members of the teams playing at ANZ that round, ANZ Stadium members and corporate guests, and fans with pre-purchased tickets.

The Rabbitohs, Dogs, Tigers, Eels and Dragons are all tenants at ANZ, so if we are playing them there, you can get to the ground free using your NRL match ticket.

The train travel applies to the entire Sydney network and NSW TrainLink intercity network.

Made a Visit to Paeroa

Went down to Paeroa the other day to see some good radio people, the folk at Nga Iwi FM, who were celebrating 25 years on air.

My new friend JoAnn Belworthy sent me this picture of the occasion, just for the newsletter.

That's JoAnn on the left, with her colleagues from health provider Te Korowai Hauora o Hauraki, Cindy Dargaville and Bridget Pakinga, and Rino Wilkinson from Nga Iwi FM.

Te Korowai is a not-for-profit society providing affordable health and wellness services across the Hauraki district for everyone in the community.



From left JoAnn Belworthy, Cindy Dargaville and Bridget Pakinga and Rino Wilkinson.



Rino Wilkinson and I.

NRL Report Out

The NRL has released its 2014 Annual Report- Building A Stronger Game, which shows league is in good shape. To read the full report [click here](#).

It was a big year for our game and key results included league achieving the top three most watched shows of any kind on Australian TV, more than 250,000 fans signing up to be members, and league now being in its strongest financial position ever.

Titans Reinstated

The NRL says the decision to reinstate the five Titans players caught up in the drug scandal around the club was consistent with the NRL rules, and legal advice received by the club.

A spokesman said the players were entitled to the presumption of innocence afforded to any other member of the community. "The process should now be followed until there is an outcome in the court proceedings," the spokesman said.



Thanks to my mate in Southland for the feed of Bluff Oysters this week. 6 doz. Very kind.

Welcome to the Stacey Jones lounge, Nigel and his team from PHB

We are pleased to support you in the Stacey Jones lounge.

Angel En Provence is available from all leading hair salons, including Rodney Wayne Shampoo N Things outlets.

Cheers Nigel

Angel PARIS
EN PROVENCE



Vodafone Warriors Heritage Jersey

Te Whare Tu Toa - The House of the Warrior,

LIKE the ornately carved meeting houses of the Māori people, this years heritage jersey “Te Whare Tu Toa” is similarly carved. The jersey design depicts the history and stories of the Warriors team.

The teams past and future are carved into the back and front of the jersey with the player inside providing the link to the present. So players donning the 2015 heritage jersey “Te Whare Tu Toa” carry with them onto the field the rich history of the Warriors club.

Effectively players are entering the house of the warriors. The 2015 Heritage Jersey celebrates the 20 year history of the club. The concept of the jersey is carved out of native timbers and features all of the players who have ever played for the clubs first grade team emblazoned onto the back of the jersey.

On the front is a carved warrior representing the future and on the lower back the carved warrior represents the first team to take the field for the club. Above the players' names is another carved warrior logo and the 3 of them together represent paying respect to the past, present and future of the club. Recognising all those who have come before and all those who may one day wear the jersey.

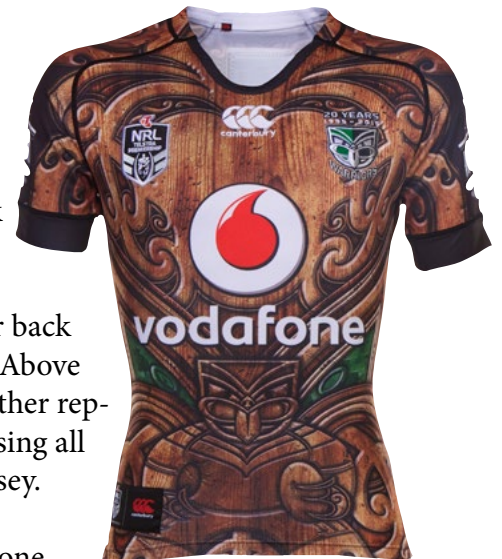
Also behind the main warrior on the front is another warrior logo - this one pays respect to the warriors whanau (or family) this represents the players families, wives, children, mothers, fathers, brothers, sisters, grandparents, cousins, it also represents the fans and sponsors and the administrators of the club. This logo sits in behind the main warrior and breathes life into the main figure. Without all of the support and people just mentioned the Warrior cannot exist. So it is about paying respect to all who follow and are involved in the club in any capacity.

There are many symbols carved into the jersey. The Mangopare (hammerhead shark) features heavily. It is a warrior like symbol. It captures the essence of the Maori proverb 'Kia mate ururoa, Kei mate wheke', i.e. to be like the shark not the octopus which surrenders at the first sign of difficulty or resistance. It symbolises facing the challenges with diligence, tenacity and determination. It represents never backing down - no matter how big the fight. The koru throughout the carving represent growth, life, reaching upward toward the light and nurturing. All important things in a warriors life.

The koru also represent movement and the free flowing style of footy that the team endeavours to play. The wood represents hardness and strength and also is symbolic of creating something's special from the block of wood. The player is shaped by the coaches, the players, the club and those around him ... just like a carver would create a beautiful carving from a block of wood. This also represents the players own journey

The design (in particular the names on the back of the jersey) is also symbolic of an honours board that one see in a rugby league club room. We pay tribute and honour all those who have made it and represented the our club. Also we pay respect to the master carvers of our great land in this jersey too.

Colin Gibson - Canterbury of New Zealand Ltd



From Warrior 1, Dean Bell, to the 192nd Warrior Tuimoala Lolohea. Every Warrior ever is listed on the back of this jersey.

Posh Universities Get into It

THE Light Blues have scored just one try in the last four years, and rarely looked like adding to that tally in a one-sided affair this year, Oxford just far too good.

My friend in the UK Mark Ramsdale sent me a big email with loads of photos all about the game, and I tell you what, there is a lot at stake in this clash, with bragging rights, and they take it very seriously indeed.

Longstanding sponsor Pcubed, a multinational project management firm, has sponsored the Rugby League Varsity Match since 1999.

Pcubed general manager Richard Siddle spoke about their involvement: "As well as being one of the major sporting events in the Oxbridge calendar, the Rugby League Varsity Match showcases the huge commitment the clubs put into a single 80 minutes.

"Rugby league is one of the most physically and mentally demanding sports, and for many of these players the Varsity Match represents the pinnacle of their playing career. Right from our inception, Pcubed has placed a high value on teamwork and dedication, and it is for that reason we have continued to support the match for such a long time."

The game regularly draws some of the biggest crowds for Oxbridge sport. The pre-match lunch saw Martin Offiah speak to 250 guests.

Mark said: "Pcubed are a terrific partner to have involved in an event like this. Their continued relationship means we can develop the event to encourage more people to play league at Oxford and Cambridge."



I want to see Mt Smart packed out like this PHOTO on Saturday.

Get 3 great games for the price of one!

Kicking off with the **Junior Warriors** defending champions this year, coached by Kelvin Wright, kick off at **12.40 pm**.

NSW CUP, coached by club legend Stacey Jones, kick off at **2.10 pm**.

Then the big game **Vodafone Warriors V EELS** kick off at **5 pm**.

Its not to late to become a member just go to www.warriorsforever.co.nz or for tickets go to www.ticketek.co.nz or ring **0800 ticketek**

lets spread the word and fill Mt Smart this Saturday.

LETS GO VODAFONE WARRIORS FANS.



Remember Don Mann who used to work at the Vodafone Warriors?

He is now playing in a band which is playing at The Empire Tavern this Friday night 20th Mar.

The band is called Bad Week for Disco and he plays bass guitar in it.

He would love to get some of us at their gig this Friday night.

MARCH 20th
EMPIRE TAVERN
VICTORIA ST WEST
Facebook.com/badweek



NSW Warriors Supporters

SYDNEY based Warriors supporter Richard Morgan has been supporting the mighty Vodafone Warriors since 1995 and has started a supporters group with the ambition of getting all Sydney based supporters sitting together at away matches. The Warriors have the most loyal fans and in Australia there is extra incentive as the NZ based Warriors are up against Aussie rivals every other week on Aussie soil.

“Every game I go to I notice that Warriors supporters are spread out all around the ground and we are out numbered but not out voiced! I really want to see all of us fans sitting together as one. One Warrior family, loud & proud! I have started up a Facebook group called NSW Warriors Supporters where I will let all warriors fans know where to sit with other passionate and fun fans, I’ll let you know of any ticket deals, bus trips, Mt Smart matches which he is looking at screening at Event Cinemas in Sydney, who wouldn’t want to watch our boys on the big screen, and simply give you as much information as I can about our mighty Warriors” said Richard.

All NSW Warriors Supporters must join this page if you want to sit with other loyal and passionate fans!

For round one, Richard hired a minivan and picked up 11 other fans and drove to the away match in Newcastle. We didn’t get the result we wanted but it’s about supporting our team at all cost’s.

Again, the next week he drove down to Canberra and distributed tickets supplied by the Vodafone Warriors Membership manager – Will Felgate to supporters arriving at the box office and enticed them to sit together as one.

“We got the win, and I got to meet some awesome Warriors fans that I know I will be seeing again at future games in Sydney. I love it (meeting new fans) and can’t wait for round 9 and round 10 when the boys come over to Sydney again to play the Sharks at Remondis Stadium and the Parramatta Eels at Pirtek Stadium, and we can represent all over again.”

Join Richard and the rest of the loud and proud Warrior supporters at the boys next game, he is a top bloke and just loves the team we all do. And join his page, you won’t miss out on any official away functions where you can meet the players, ticket offers and the location of all Warrior Supporter Bays.

Like the page at: <https://www.facebook.com/Warriorsupporters>



NZ Unlikely to be Jinxed by the Ghosts of 1992

By John Deaker



THE quarter-finals of cricket's World Cup kick off this week and it's unlikely we'll see a repeat of the 1992 scenario that saw New Zealand knocked out in the first phase of sudden-death play.

On the 21st of March 1992 New Zealand took on Pakistan in a match that New Zealand cricket fans have had nightmares about ever since. That day the then-no-name 22 year-old Inzamam-ul-Haq was able to snatch victory from the jaws of defeat when he miraculously smashed 60 off 37 balls to advance Pakistan through to the final. 23 years later the one-day format has changed so much that scoring a century off 37 balls in the modern game would be almost the equivalent of Inzamam's spectacular innings that day at Eden Park.

The quality of the players in New Zealand's squad from 1992 to 2015 has changed almost as much as the manner in which the 50 over format has been transformed. In particular the quality and depth of the Black Caps' bowling stocks is incomparable to the 'Young Guns' team which relied on some very good exponents of 'dibbly dobbly' bowling like Gavin Larsen to strangle batsman into errors. New Zealand's only genuine pace threat with the ball back then was Danny Morrison - which meant Crowe's 'gamble' to open the bowling with Dipak Patel's off-spinners was a decision that was almost forced upon him.

During the 2015 tournament New Zealand has had the luxury of being unable to fit a world-class opening bowler like Kyle Mills (ranked the number 1 ODI bowler in the world in February 2009) into their side at any time throughout pool-play - and it's likely they'll stick with the Southee and Boult combination on Saturday.

There is an outside chance New Zealand might try to fit Mills into their starting side this week following Mitchell McClenaghan's poor performance against Bangladesh and the ongoing concerns over Adam Milne's injuries and economy rate. The more likely scenario though is they'll resist the temptation to make another change and revert to the 11 (which included Milne) that did the job so effectively for them right through the first 5 matches of pool-play.

Most talk in the build up to the quarter-final clash

in Wellington focuses on the 'Gayle warning' (a bit ironic when the match is in the notoriously windy capital AND a cyclone has threatened the eastern part of New Zealand this week) and the damage Chris Gayle can potentially do at the top of the West Indies' batting lineup.

For the Black Caps the fact that the one-day game has changed so much in recent times should add to their belief that even if Gayle does cause some destruction he won't be able to singlehandedly knock them out of the cup. Gayle would need strong support to get his team up over 300 – a total that has almost become the minimum par score for teams in one-dayers. The Black Caps should also take comfort in the knowledge that apart from Gayle's double century against a weak Zimbabwe bowling attack he's averaged 9.5 in his last 10 innings in one-dayers.

The West Indies' recent record with the ball should also add to the Kiwis' belief that they'll be able to set or chase down well over 300. The West Indies allowed Ireland to score 307 in their loss to them, Zimbabwe scored 289 against them and of course South Africa plundered 408 off their attack.

While they won't want to get ahead of themselves, New Zealand will probably take nearly as much interest in some of the other quarter-final results as they will in their own match. In particular if the in-form Kumar Sangakarra can lead Sri Lanka to victory over South Africa it would do the Black Caps a big favour. New Zealand's recent form against Sri Lanka is much superior to their record against South Africa.

There's been the suggestion by many people in New Zealand that the format of the tournament is harsh the way it gives a limited reward to the Black Caps for their unbeaten run through pool play. Brendon McCullum hasn't been one of these people. He is the type of leader who encourages accountability within his team and he knows that if his Black Caps team don't progress past the West Indies on Saturday it's not the format's fault.

McCullum won't even be considering a loss this week – the most significant difference from 1992 is that this Black Caps team know they are good and don't go out on the field hoping to win – they EXPECT to win. That will be the case this Saturday, March 21st.

Newest Warriors Fan

MORNING Butch, I thought you might like to see the newest Warrior fan, , being of course Erin Thompson's wee baby (and my first Grandchild). Erin's partner Keenan Brightmore is also a Warriors fan and was in the lounge for all our home games last year.

Isaac was born JANUARY 16 weighing 3.9kg (8lb7oz) and was 54cm long . He had a bit of a scary start as he wasn't breathing well enough so he was in the NICU (intensive care) for first few days of his life.

He has really bounced back now though weighing 6kg and is 62cm long, a budding Warrior for sure. And will be coming to the Stacey Jones lounge with his mum and dad this season

Cheers Mate. Lounge member Robert Thompson



Lovely Letter from Dot

LOT of talk this week about people being rude and unkind. I'm no day dreamer, but I do believe there's still far more good than bad in the world. Have a look at this really nice letter from Dot in Christchurch. Dot it was a pleasure.

Goodmorning,

Thank you so much for my wonderful package you sent what an amazing man you are. Cor after my boys last night I already thought I was in for a good week and you have just made it even better. And funnily enough only two people have mentioned the game to me today but last Monday just about every second person had something to say. I just told them get back to me at the end of the season when we are

in the Grand Final.

You look great in the picture and I will be framing that as I did with the note you already sent me. Gosh im just gob-smacked that someone like you would take the time to think of me I cant wait to tell and show my kids.

And we looked great last night Simon just keeps on going and woah is he Mr consistent or what, and of course Manu looked fantastic and his running is so good and I'm pleased Shauny did well so the bloody haters can Shut the hell up, they all did great and it was good to have Sammy back.

Thanks again so much, Dot Eaton

Dennis Williams - Former Kiwis Captains

FORMER Kiwis captain Dennis Williams and wife Sheryl want to show their catch up at Ruakaka. Now that's what you call a good day fishing!



Grounds for Debate

By John Coffey QSM



I HOPE the good folk of Auckland who read this newsletter have supported the Vodafone Warriors' submissions to the Auckland City Council about its terribly misguided stadiums plan.

Incredibly, the council intends to shunt rugby league to Eden Park or North Harbour, while transforming Mount Smart into a speedway track and making Western Springs a cricket oval for only five playing days a year.

During my long sports writing career I covered plenty of cricket at the mis-shapen Eden Park but only one rugby league occasion, the 1988 World Cup final. Far from being a garden of Eden, it was just adequate for cricket but was, and is, totally unsuitable for rugby league.

Now the rugby union – which vetoed a rectangular waterfront stadium for their 2011 World Cup – are about to kick cricket into touch, just as they did at Lancaster Park in Christchurch. Instead, they want the Warriors and Kiwis to help pay off their self-inflicted Eden Park debt.

Eden Park will never be a rugby

league ground. Leaguies know their turf and make it their own territory. As a kid in Greymouth I tasted plenty of Wingham Park mud. And I watched a succession of Auckland teams suffer defeats at the hands of unheralded West Coast sides who fiercely defended that mud.

Similarly, Frank Endacott made the Addington Show Grounds a fortress when coaching Canterbury to a series of home victories over visiting sides in the 1990s. One Auckland coach was so traumatised that he labelled the Show Grounds the "Killing Fields". But not even Happy Frank could save the Show Grounds from the Government, Christchurch City Council and rugby union when they gave "our" ground to the Crusaders after the earthquakes. Rugby league has become a homeless sport down here. Don't let it happen in Auckland.

Warriors recruit Jonathan Wright told Radio Sport how intimidating it is for Australian NRL clubs to make the trip to Mount Smart. It is imprinted on their minds that they face (for them) difficult travel arrangements and terrible Auckland weather. Then they meet a

fired-up home side in front of a hotly parochial crowd.

That's just the way it should be in professional sport. In comparison, Eden Park is sterile, and is nobody's home patch.

Then there is North Harbour (QBE) Stadium, which apparently exists only to accommodate the smattering of spectators who turn up for provincial rugby union matches. Geographically, it may as well be on Mars.

But, wait, I have a solution. The other day I watched Auckland's current cricket team playing Canterbury at Rangiora. Six of the Auckland players had South African accents.

Why not leave the cashed-up rugby union to pay its own bills at Eden Park, then bulldoze North Harbour Stadium and build a cricket oval there? Don't most South African ex-pats live on the north shore? And then the Warriors can stay at Mount Smart in front of their own people. Problem solved!

Learn how you can help at:

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



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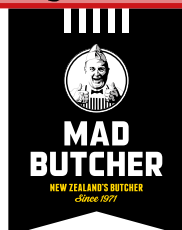
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- 10% discount off CCC Vodafone Warriors merchandise
- \$150 members price for 2015 jerseys save \$35 on RRP

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



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:**

shandall@madbutcher.co.nz

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



HOW good is South Sydney going? After winning last year's Grand Final they have gotten better and better. They were impressive in their Auckland Nines victory and just a couple of weeks later, they smashed St. Helens 39-0 in the World Club Championship and this outstanding effort came after the long journey to the north of England. Jumping on a plane just hours after the win, they arrived back in Australia just a week before they had to fly to Brisbane to take on the Broncos in their opening competition game. Because of the testing lead-up to this first game, many people tipped Brisbane to upset the Premiers. But this didn't happen and Souths raced in for five tries while letting their opponents cross for just the one four pointer. The 36-6 scoreline was a good indication of Souths domination.

After this Thursday night match, they had a break of 10 days before they took on the Roosters at ANZ Stadium in Sydney last Sunday. Although it was only the second round, a lot of good judges predicted these two sides would meet in this year's Grand Final. The game lived up to expectations and 11 high quality tries were scored. The Bunnies dominated the first 20 minutes or so, but when the Roosters began to get an equal share of possession, they showed their class. After Souths went to a 12-0 lead, the Roosters piled on 22 unanswered points and looked the likely winner. But Souths were not fazed and played low-mistake football in the final 15 minutes to collect the win and the competition points.

After two games, the Rabbits have scored 70 points to 32 against. More importantly they have collected 11 tries, with eight of these coming from their talented and young backline. Joel Reddy, Dylan Walker and Alex Johnston have two tries each with Greg Inglis, Issac Luke, Luke Keary, John Sutton and George Burgess picking up one each. Inglis was at his brilliant best against the Roosters while New Zealander, Isaac Luke, showed what a force he is. In my opinion Issac is the best hooker in the game at the moment and that includes Australian captain, Cameron Smith.

Between them, the Burgess brothers George and Tom made 290 metres in Sunday's game and their power running sent many defenders reeling backwards, such as Roosters second rower, Boyd Cordner. While Souths' many super stars shone against the Roosters, the lesser lights also did plenty of damaging work.

Now in his second season with the club, 29 year old Joel Reddy, was playing just his eighth first grade match for Souths, but he was impressive. Despite plenty of attention from opposing fullback Roger Tuivasa-Sheck, Reddy scored the try which put his side in front 28-26 with less than 10 minutes to play and also made five tackle busts.

Left winger Alex Johnston, 20, was playing his 20th first grade match and now has 23 tries to his credit. Against the Roosters, Johnston topped the run metres with 174, while Inglis was second with 163.

New buy, Glenn Stewart, topped the tackle count with 53 and already he is proving he is one of the buys of the year. Although he is now 31, the five Test veteran showed what a positive he will be for Souths this year. George Burgess made 35 tackles and scored a try. When you add this to his 156 running metres, it illustrates what a dominating role he played in the victory. These tackles and big runs came against a big, powerful and physical pack of forwards.

In more positive news for the Rabbits, their under 20 side scored a last minute 24-22 win over the Roosters. Talented 19 year old half, Jordie Hedges crossed under the posts for the last minute try to lock the scores up at 22-all. He then calmly slotted the conversion to give the young Rabbitohs the win. Hedges finished with 14 points. An interesting member of the Souths Holden Cup team is 18 year utility back, Liam Coleman. He is the son of Craig "Tugger" Coleman, who played around 200 first grade matches in 11 seasons with Souths from 1982. Craig finished with 268 first grade games after also playing with Gold Coast and Western Suburbs. The cheeky half-back also played with Widnes and Hull in England. He also coached Souths for four seasons and was in charge when the League booted the club out of the competition in 2000. When they were reinstated in 2002, Craig was again the first grade coach.

18 year old winger, Damon Goolagong, has a big future in front of him. Born at Orange in the NSW western town of Orange, Damon is the nephew of two time Wimbledon Singles winner, Yvonne Goolagong-Cawley. Goolagong joined Souths this year from Wyong Roos on the NSW Central Coast and has played strongly for the Souths young side.

Photos from the **Vodafone Warriors** Launch 2015

Vodafone Warriors launch at SkyCity last night. The MC for the night was Beau Ryan from the Aussie footy show. Those invited include players, partners, sponsors and the media. It was a fantastic event.



Charlie Gubb. Does the carpet match the drapes?



Beau meets the Vodafone Warriors.



Shaun, Sam and Dan (the football manager).



Charlotte, Sam Tomkins partner & Tui-Kay Jacob Lillyman better half.



Ryan Goodman and Beau Ryan.



Sam lisone, Glen fishiiahi and Siliva havili all looking great in there suites.



Two smiling Tongan lads. Solomon Kata and Konrad Hurrell



Jim Doyle CEO of the Vodafone warriors and wife Joanne



Shaun Johnson with Beau Ryan, the nights MC.



Nathan Friend, who will play his 200th NRL game on Saturday, with his lovely wife Kelly.



Me and the NRL footy show star Beau Ryan at last night's Vodafone warriors launch.

What's Been Happening in Northland

By Ben Francis



Sports Expo

Recently up in Dargaville was the Northern Wairoa Sports expo. It was a good chance to meet some people from the local teams, and take part in some games. Sports included, Rugby League, Golf, Netball, Karate, Football, Rugby union, Gymnastics and Hockey.

There were some representatives for FIFA Under 20 World Cup which is being hosted by New Zealand and starts May 30 talking about the four games that will be held in Whangarei, one of them being a round of 16 match.

Along with that former All Black Bruce Robinson was with Northland Rugby, teaching kids passing skills, kicking skills. It was a great day for the local kids to try their hand at a number of sports. I took part in a game of Ripper Rugby and I think it's safe to say Northland Rugby has a few stars on the way.

Arm Wrestling For A Cause

This Friday, a big event is occurring in Dargaville. Our community Radio Station has issued an Arm Wrestling Challenge with the local volunteer Fire Brigade. The public is encouraged to come and attend. The main event has been headlined as a Beauty from the Fire Station against a beast from Big River FM. The event will be taking place March 20th at 7pm to be held at the Dargaville Fire Station. There will be prizes up for grabs along with all money raised on the night going to Dargaville Volunteer Fire Station.

Northland Rugby In 2015

Three Northland ITM players are playing in this year's Super Rugby Competition, Hooker Matt Moulds (Blues, Wider Training Squad) Lock Tom Murday (Reds, short term contract) and Flanker Dan Pryor (Highlanders, full time player) all three were standout players in the ITM Cup in 2014. Dan Pryor has played the most rugby, coming off the bench and making immediate impact. He's hard to miss with his head of hair.

Blues first five Dan Bowden is back for Northland in the 2015 ITM Cup season, having played for them between 2005-2007 earning player of the year in 2007.

Northland rugby was very happy to announce that former player Tim Dow would return to the club as a Personal Development Manager. Tim played 80 games over 11 seasons with Northland, and even played a handful of games with the Blues.

If you are wanting any more information on Club rugby in Northland or want to play you can head along too <http://www.taniwha.co.nz/club-rugby/>

Adam Blair Trophy Heading for Exciting Finish

Whangarei Boys High School appear to be on a mission to take back the Northtec Adam Blair Trophy as they continue to romp through the competition. They were upset in last year's final over Kamo College. With only one round to go before the playoffs begin, it's a tight race to the qualify. Whangarei Boys kept Dargaville High School scoreless 58-0, Bay of Islands College beat Tikipunga High School 34-4. Northland College had their second draw this season with a 20-all draw between Okaihau College. Kura Hokianga played out a tough 34-30 win between Whangaroa College and Kaitia College beat Brothers (Far North team) 30-0.

The Northtec Adam Blair Trophy select XIII team to play a Warriors Development squad on March 28 at Lindvart Park in Kaikohe as part of the Northland Premiership Season kicking off. This will be the third year in a row this match has gone on. Last year, the Warriors team won 42-28.



Kids playing some footy



Adam Blair with his trophy.

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the newsletter happen - and like everything it's a team effort.



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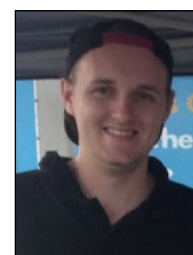
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