

20 YEARS
VODAFONE



Sir Peter Leitch's

Mad Butcher Club

AT MT SMART STADIUM, HOME OF THE MIGHTY VODAFONE WARRIORS

Newsletter

23rd July 2015

#82

To subscribe or unsubscribe email: stephan.maier@medstar.co.nz

THE SEA EAGLES ARE COMING OVER THIS SATURDAY 5PM TO MT SMART. DETAILS BELOW:



Timetable:

Box Office: 12 noon

Gates Open: 12:30pm

NYC Kick-off: 12:40pm

NSW Cup Kick-off: 2:45pm

NRL Kick-off: 5pm

Approx. Finish: 7pm

Any visitors from out of town are more than welcome to join our VIP tour of Mt Smart Stadium on Saturday. We assemble at 3pm at the lift at the back of the Western Stand (Colin Kay Stand) which is at the Southern End of the stand. This is a rare opportunity to see behind the scenes of the mighty Vodafone Warriors operation. The tour is led by my very good mate DEXTER.

Lunch in the Stacey Jones Lounge...

For anyone who is coming to the lounge this Saturday here is this week's menu.

We will serve the buffet around 4pm - all welcome but it pays to book in advance.

We have been getting a lot of special dietary requests from guests in the lounge for the last couple of games, so is it possible if they require anything special for their meals to please contact [Angela Charman - click here](#).

Cold Selection:

- Freshly baked bread roll with butter.
- Mix leaf salad with tomato, cucumber, red onion and feta

Hot Selection:

- Roast beef with garlic and rosemary gravy.
- Roast Potato
- Garden peas
- Carrots

Warriors Old Boys Attending:

Brian Henare, Gavin Hill, Duane Mann, Jerry Seuseu, Stacey Jones, Ruben Wiki, Grant Young, Awen Guttenbeil, Iva Ropati, Mark Horo, Logan Swann, Sione Faumui-na, Jerome Ropati, Talite Liavaa, John Simon, Justin Murphy, Wairangi Koopu, Nigel Vagana, Anthony Seuseu, Tony Tuimavave, Francis Meli, Mark Tookey, Cliff Beverly, Whetu Taewa, Joe Vagana, Monty Betham, Steve Price, Boycie Nelson, Robbie Mears, Wade Mckinnon, Henry Perenara, Brent Webb, Henry Faafili, Tony Tatupu, Kevin Campion, Joe Galuvao, Herewini Rangi, Aaron Whittaker, Jason Death, Jason Temu, Scott Coxon and Anthony Swann.

IT WAS not a great weekend, my Mangere East Hawks thrashed 44-14 by the Papakura Sea Eagles.

I did get out to Waiheke, only to have my flagpole blown down, but it was nice to relax before tuning in to all the Vodafone Warriors games.

The Juniors put a smile on my face, battering the Roosters 42-20 to sit nicely at fifth in the eight.

And a win over Illawarra gave the Stacey Jones coached Vodafone Warriors the outright lead in the New South Wales Cup premiership race after co-leaders Penrith lost. I thought, 'now that's a good start, so bring on the main attraction.' I almost wished I hadn't bothered.

We got what can only be described as a hiding, going down to the Roosters in Sydney 24-0. Quite frankly, we were lucky to get nil.

About the only thing that can be said was that we were 18-0 down at halftime, so restricted the Roosters to only one try in the second half, and that off a forward pass too.

100 For Shaun

It must have been a very mixed day on Sunday for our halfback Shaun Johnson. He was presented with his match jersey by his father at special luncheon on Thursday and his dad even flew over for the game to celebrate his 100th NRL game, but it was one he would probably sooner forget.

Being held to nil is a feather in the Roosters cap, and will have bitterly disappointed all Warriors fans. It was not that we had to win, but the commentators through the week were saying we had to compete and play well, and I'm not sure we managed that. So we are still left with the big question: Contenders or Pretenders?

Manly Is Old Boys Day

THIS Saturday is another day, and we have Manly at Mt Smart at 5pm on what is Old Boys day, when the club brings back former players to celebrate the parts they played in our history.

Former players will be out in force for what will be another demanding home clash. Among those lined up to return are Mark Tookey, PJ Marsh, Jason Death, Francis Meli, Henry Faafili, Nigel Vagana, Mark Horo, Logan Swann and Wade McKinnon. plus many more

A number of the former players arrive in Auckland

on Thursday night and I am told Awen Guttenbeil is taking some of them out for dinner at Soul Bar.

On the Friday a number will come to the captains run and have lunch with the NRL squad in the east stand and check out my memorabilia before heading out to the golf course.

A few players are still waiting on confirmation that they can get here, but I am certainly looking forward to what is always a great occasion.

The players will be hosted in a marquee in the North Stand on game day, with a handful of former staff members.

About 40 will be recognised pre-match before forming a guard of honour for the NRL side.

Check out the front page for a list of players attending.

Havili A Dragon

Hooker Siliva Havili will go at the end of the season to take up a contract with the Dragons.

The 22-year-old was signed until the end of next season but will leave as the club continues to realign its NRL squad.

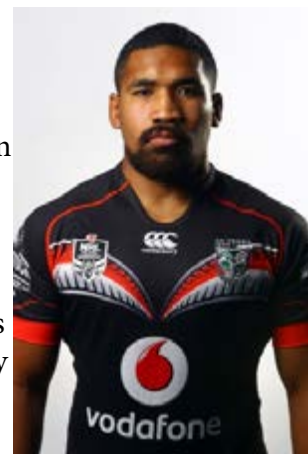
"We have Issac Luke coming next year, we also have Thomas Leuluai who can fill the role and we've just extended young Nathaniel Roache to the end of the 2017 season," Vodafone Warriors head coach Andrew McFadden said.

"We're happy to see Siliva have an opportunity to develop with another club, but for now he's very much part of our plans for the rest of this season."

There is also still an opportunity for veteran hooker Nathan Friend to remain after the club made him a one-year offer for 2016.

Havili, who played more than 50 NYC games for the club from 2011-2013, made his NRL debut last year and appeared in his 11th match in the loss to the Roosters.

Havili made his Kiwi debut in last year's Anzac test and was in the 2014 Four Nations squad although he didn't play a game.



ASIC Vodafone Warriors Signed Poster Winners

Congratulations to:

Talum Sinclair-Harris - NSW Australia

Mark Rayner - Tauranga

Tyler Blake - Albany

Ray Ferguson - Papakura

Liams Wallace - Christchurch



Because we had so many entrants our good mates at Ascis have given us two more posters to giveaway.

They go to:

Paul Larson - Greymouth

Corey Jackson - Christchurch



Out and About - Here is who I caught up with this week.



Caught up with one of my recruits, from wing 259 when I was a patron at the Police College, Stephen on Waiheke.



Raymond is the first customer to buy the latest Stadium Jacket only available at the Stadium Store at Mt Smart Stadium or online Warriorsstore.com.



MARK RAMSDALE who is a rugby league fan in the UK sent me this photo of him taking one of our plates from the Kiwis LONG Luncheon to Parliament in the UK to show his work colleagues.



Former Kiwi and Warrior Brent Webb and his lovely wife Jen have opened a Paleo Friendly, Gluten Free Cafe. It is located in the entrance to the Ludus Magnus gym on 9 Karaka St Eden Terrace. Pop in and try it out.

No Excuses, But...

Even though we can't use it as an excuse, we do need to take into account that we still have young players learning their trade.

The Roosters backline on Sunday had 777 NRL games experience, ours just 335.

Can you imagine how good our backline will be with another 400 games experience!

One example is Blake Ferguson. He has played 111 NRL games and his opposite for us, Solomone Kata, just 17, Michael Jennings has played 184 games and David Fusitu'a only 15.

Just thought I'd share that.

Tomkins One To Come Out With Credit

Another solid defensive display from Sam Tomkins was one of the few weekend highlights, but we again had issues with our error count, and this time it cost us, along with penalties being conceded.

Needing to regroup, we had the worst possible start to the second spell as old boy James Maloney scored, and the Roosters would have gone in again but for Tomkins .

At least we defended admirably, after that, because the score could easily have blown out.

The result means we slip out of the top four after just one week. In the ultra-tight competition we are now seventh, one of four teams in fifth on 22, two behind fourth-placed South Sydney.

Juniors Crush Roosters

As I said, the Vodafone Junior Warriors won 42-20 over the Roosters. The win not only avenged a loss at home to the Roosters last month but added to our form on the road.

We had just two wins in our last six, both away, and this was our fourth road win on end, and one that ensured we retained fifth spot, just a point behind fourth-placed Canberra and two ahead of next week's opponent Manly.

The Roosters were unable to contain the Vodafone Junior Warriors across the park, especially in the forwards.

Left wing Lewis Soosemea got a double, his first try a real stunner from well out.

Maumalo Gets Four

A second victory over Illawarra – powered by Ken Maumalo's four-try haul – has given the Vodafone Warriors the outright lead in the New South Wales Cup.

While we were holding on to beat the Cutters 24-22 – and claim our fourth straight win – the Panthers fell to a 24-10 loss to Canterbury-Bankstown.

Since a heavy home defeat by the Bulldogs in round 13, the Vodafone Warriors have collected 12 points in the last six rounds from four straight wins and two byes.

We had a notable line-up change for the match, with Konrad Hurrell coming back from injury.

Three Games For The Price Of One

Don't forget this weekend at the Vodafone Warriors it is three games for the price of one with the gates open at 12.30pm for the NYC game at 12.40pm, the NSW Cup game at 2.45pm and the big game at 5pm.

The Fish Is Back

Glen Fisiiahi is set for his first NRL appearance in more than 15 months after being named on the wing for the Vodafone Warriors' game against Manly at Mt Smart on Saturday (5pm kick-off).

The 24-year-old's 2014 season ended with a shoulder injury against Cronulla on April 5 last year, a week after he'd scored four tries in our win over the Tigers.

After recovering from surgery Fisiiahi made a try-scoring return in our NSW Cup side against Penrith in mid-April, only to suffer a knee injury.

Since recovering from that, he has scored four tries in three winning appearances for the NSW side.

In 28 NRL matches since his debut in 2011, Fisiiahi has scored 15 tries - seven of them in the first five rounds of the 2014 season before his injury.

And more important for me is that Glen is one of the nicest guys you could hope to find. If anyone deserves a run of good luck it is him. His patience and determination through all his woes have been incredible.



Glen Fisiiahi

Big night for Papakura

AND EVEN though those Papakura Sea Eagles beat up on my Hawks I will give them a plug, because they are a progressive club and they have a special guest lined up for their Papakura Rugby League Foundation dinner on August 7 at 6pm.

The foundation was set up by a group of local business people to promote league in the area and help up-and-coming players, and they have secured league legend and St George great Mark Gasnier (played 15 games for Australia, 12 games for NSW and 174 games for the Dragons) as the guest of honour at the Papakura RSA event.



Come Join Us For The

PAPAKURA RUGBY LEAGUE FOUNDATION DINNER

**Friday 7th August
Doors Open at 6.00pm**

**Guest Speaker
MARK GASNIER**

**Papakura RSA
Elliot Street, Papakura**

**Tickets \$70.00 each or
\$650.00 for a Table of 10**

Cash Bar

**Contact
Kevin Mitchell 298 8800 or
Ian Horsnell 0274 749 648**



Interchange To Change

The number of interchanges is to be cut from 10 to eight and a shot clock will be introduced to reduce stoppages under changes next season.

The NRL said the changes would be the most significant to the game in decades.

Four players will still be on the bench.

The changes will form a package to give fans a more continuous and free-flowing game, while ensuring it is safer for players.

And after more reviews, the interchanges could be reduced further in the future.

Apparently it is all about rewarding endurance and fitness, and opening the game up because there is concern the game will become even more structured, defensive and predictable if changes aren't made.

The interchange reduction will also apply across the Holden Cup.

Special Offer For The Sharks Game On Saturday 1St August

For one game only the Vodafone Warriors are giving fans the chance to sign up as a member and get access to the Sharks game for the same price as a ticket.

For just \$30 you can access to some great member benefits. Including member discounts on merchandise and presale access to the NRL finals series if the Vodafone Warriors take part. Buy your Shark attack membership now at www.Warriors.Kiwi and show your support for the club by becoming a member



Match Day Sponsor



The boys will be wearing this Heritage Jersey when they play the Sea Eagles this Saturday.



VODAFONE WARRIORS VS SEA EAGLES

BUY NOW AT TICKETEK.CO.NZ/VODAFONEWARRIORS



DEFEND OUR HOME THIS SATURDAY

Kickoff 5pm Mt Smart Stadium. Adults from \$25; Children from \$10.

Ticket terms and conditions, purchase conditions and transactions fees apply.





2015

MITO FIGHT NIGHT



Raising Funds and Awareness for Mitochondrial Disease in New Zealand

CHARITY BOXING

Saturday 26th September
Te Awamutu Events Centre
Te Awamutu



Boxers representing Police Fire
Corrections and Healthcare



Featuring Amateur Kickboxing
and a Charity Auction



Tickets: \$30 Door Sales: \$40 Tables: \$600/8pax
All ticket enquiries: Carole.Foster@police.govt.nz
www.facebook.com/Mitochondrial.disease.fundraising

Doors Open at 6:00pm



Birth Places and Blood Lines

By John Coffey QSM



IN RECENT days another football code has been embroiled in a player eligibility wrangle, one which might have cost New Zealand's under-23 soccer team an Olympic Games experience. The situation of South African-born Deklan Wynne has similarities to that of Australian-born Nathan Fien, who was ruled ineligible for the Kiwis during the 2006 Four Nations series.

Then there was the strange case of All Black Shane Howarth, who later played 19 times for Wales before it was revealed his grandmother was not born in Wales, but in New Zealand. Like Fien, his case was dubbed "Grannygate". Fien eventually qualified for the Kiwis on residential grounds and scored the winning try in the 2010 Four Nations final.

It still annoys me to see James Tamou wearing NSW and Australian colours, having already represented New Zealand Maori. Ignoring an emerging Tamou was not the smartest decision by the Kiwis selectors a few years ago, though he would struggle to get a start on the current Kiwis front-row roster. Hopefully, trans-Tasman tug-of-wars have been ended now that New Zealand-born players must be living in Australia before the age of 13 to play State of Origin.

Back in the old amateur days it did not matter where a footballer was born and raised, only where he lived and played at the time a representative team was selected. The 1907-08 All Golds included fullback "Jum" Turtill, who had emigrated from England with his family at the age of four. He was also an All Black but, after signing for St Helens in 1909, enlisted in the British Army and was killed on a French battlefield during the First World War.

George Beadle travelled to England for the ill-fated 1939 Kiwis tour – abandoned after two games because of the outbreak of another world war – alongside plenty of team-mates born in Auckland. George's birthplace was actually Bishop Auckland, a market town in county Durham. One of our finest halfbacks, Jimmy Haig (1947-54), also an All Black, was born in the small Scottish town of Prestonpans.

Arguably the most exotic birthplace of all our Kiwis was that of inside back Johnny Dodds, who toured Australia in 1930. By then Dodds was playing for the powerful Blackball club on the West Coast. But his passport testified he was born in Little Rock,

Arkansas. The Dodds family settled in Blackball in 1910, when little Johnny was three years old. He later coached Blackball and West Coast and was a New Zealand selector.

Dodds was not our only United States import. Roy Proebstel first saw the light of day in Vancouver – not the Canadian one, but a city in Washington state. He was seven when he landed in Wellington, growing up to be a speedy wing for Petone and tour Australia in 1913.

The Brimble family tops all others, and not just because three brothers, Edward, Walter and Wilfred were Kiwis. Edward played a Test against England in 1932 and his siblings toured Australia in 1938. All were inside backs and shared the second Christian name of Pierrepont. Because of their dusky complexions they were also chosen in various Maori teams, but had no Maori blood.

They were actually the sons of Englishman Harold Pierrepont Brimble, who left his native Bristol to seek work in South Africa at the age of 17. While there he joined the British Army and was badly wounded during the Boer War. Harold was nursed back to health by a Bantu woman, Jane (her English name) Depua Mahdna, who was the niece of a tribal chief. Romance blossomed and they were married.

Five sons, John, Cyril, Edward, and twins Walter and Lionel, were born in Molteno in the Cape Province before they sailed for a new life in Sydney. But Australia's whites-only settlement laws caused them to move again. They lived in Hawaii for two years, where Wilfred was born. In 1914 they settled in Auckland and welcomed a seventh son, Amyas. Tragically, father Harold and little Amyas were victims of a Spanish influenza epidemic.

The Brimbles were a great footy-playing family. In addition to South Africa-born Edward and Walter and Hawaii-born Wilfred being rugby league internationals, John played rugby union for Auckland, Cyril for Canterbury and Lionel for Manukau. And no-one ever asked them where they came from or questioned their eligibility.

Sao Coming Home

Manly forward Ligi Sao will rejoin the Vodafone Warriors on a two-year contract next year.

The Manurewa Marlins junior joined the Sea Eagles in 2013 after 36 NYC appearances for us, including our 2011 grand final win.

Since his NRL debut in 2013 he has made 16 appearances, 15 of them this season, mainly off the bench, although he has started at loose forward in Manly's last two games.

"We've been watching Ligi and he has developed at Manly, especially this year, with a lot more exposure at NRL level," our head coach Andrew McFadden said.

"He helps our depth with our middle players and increases competition for spots. It's also great to be able to bring Ligi home."

Sao will find plenty of familiar faces from his NYC days with former team-mates Konrad Hurrell, Raymond Faitala-Mariner, David Fusitu'a, Ngani Laumape, Albert Vete and Ben Henry among those in the NRL squad.

Tuimolala Into The Centres

Tuimoala Lolohea moves into the centres on Saturday for the injured David Fusitu'a (knee). Konrad Hurrell was out after picking up a one-match suspension for dangerous contact when he returned

from injury in Saturday's 24-22 NSW Cup win over Illawarra.

Manu And Ryan Still Out

Not considered for Manly were veterans Manu Vatuvei (shoulder) and Ryan Hoffman (calf). Vatuvei is expected to return against the Dragons in Wellington on August 8, while it's hoped Hoffman will be available to face the Sharks at Mt Smart a week earlier.

A Tugh One For Sure

We are seventh and after Manly's 30-12 loss to North Queensland they are 13th but the Sea Eagles have been one of our most difficult opponents in our 20-year history. We have won only eight of 26 against Manly and just three out of 12 at Mt Smart.

Our last win was at home in 2013, and that was our only success in nine outings.

BUY TICKETS NOW | VODAFONE WARRIORS v MANLY

Your team for Saturday: *Sam Tomkins, Fisiiahi, Lolohea, Solomone Kata, Jonathan Wright, Chad Townsend, Shaun Johnson, Jacob Lilyman, Nathan Friend, Ben Matulino, Bodene Thompson, Raymond Faitala-Mariner, Simon Mannering.* Bench: *Silvia Havili, Sione Lousi, Sam Rapira, Albert Vete, Sam Lisone.*

ARL Round 14 premiership review from the Auckland league scene – Scorpions suffer survival blow

THE NORTHCOTE Tigers have taken their most significant step to ensuring they remain in the Appliance Shed Fox Memorial Premiership for 2016, after beating the Otara Scorpions 18-4 on Saturday.

With the Scorpions sitting in last position, just one point behind Northcote heading into Round 14, the game shaped as a crucial one for the survival hopes of both teams.

The victory in the featured Maori TV game means Northcote jump three points clear of the bottom with just four games to go.

Earlier in the day at Birkenhead War Memorial Otahuhu all but guaranteed their own survival with an 18-12 victory over the Glenora Bears.

Ladder leaders Mt Albert just scraped past Marist

20-18 in a battle of the central suburbs, but the Saints remain fourth after nearest rivals Howick went down 30-10 to Pt Chevalier.

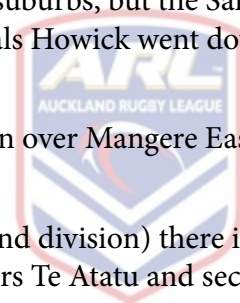
Papakura cruised to a 44-14 win over Mangere East in the round's remaining game.

In the SAS Sharman Cup (second division) there is no change at the top with leaders Te Atatu and second placed Richmond both winning.

Last year's third division winners the Mt Wellington Warriors knocked off the Bay Roskill Vikings to assume third position on the ladder.

[Click here](#) for Appliance Shed Fox Memorial ladders, results and fixtures.

[Click here](#) for SAS Sharman Cup ladders, results and fixtures.





Jason Hemson General Manager Of Wellington Rugby League On The Vodafone Warriors Game In Wellington

2015 WILL be looked back on as a very special occasion for the players that make the WRL Grand Final at Westpac Stadium. The fact is that without the Warriors coming to town again it would just not be possible for this game to happen at the Caketin.

So on top of what will be a great clash between the Warriors and the Benji Marshall led St George Dragons, two teams will get the once in a lifetime experience of playing on Wellingtons premier turf. The relationship between Wellington and the Warriors should not be overlooked as over the past 20 years the contribution to both the Warriors NRL team and the Premeirship winning 20s teams in terms of players has been significant.

Warrior #11 is none other than Kapiti junior and current Kiwis coach Stephen Kearney who was joined in that first year by Upper Hutt Tigers Syd Eru, Warrior #19. The list is Marc Ellis(#29), Richie Blackmore(#26), Zane Clarke(#54), Vince Mellars(#106), Simon Mannering(#125), Ben Matulino(#142), Alehana Mara(#162) and the latest Charlie Gubb(#183) who is turning into a real cult figure. Added to this list are a number of 20s players that were part of winning premierships teams such as Luke Laban, Kurt Robinson and Paul Ulberg. This list however is only the tip of the iceberg of Wellington players in the NRL over the past 20 years and with the up and coming talent such as the Storms Nelson Asofa-Solomona and the Knights, Jo Tapine and Danny Levi the production line continues.

The 2015 edition is the 3rd year in a row that we will host the Warriors and it gives our local junior players and supporters the chance to see the action of the NRL live and for some to experience playing on Westpac Stadium. To be able to rub shoulders with the stars they see on TV could be just the inspiration for the next wave of NRL players from Wellington that aspire to be a Warrior and a Kiwi.

On top of match day there will be a lot of off field activity around the region which all adds to the occasion including a number of opportunities to meet the players.

Whilst the scale of the week's lead up will not be as hectic as in 2013 where we conducted something like 32 events in the week from school and club visits to corporate breakfasts, the WRL community is looking forward to getting along and supporting the boys as they look for a run into the NRL finals.

Finally it would be remiss of me to not talk about the most significant contribution to the Mighty Vodafone Warriors from Wellington and that is none other than the 19th Warrior and Patron of the NZRL, Sir Peter Leitch. The Butcher is their #1 supporter and is a good old Wellington boy from Newtown.

There is no better example of the close ties between the Warrriors and Wellington.

Jason Hemson
General Manager
Wellington Rugby League



Saturday 25th July

Grand Final Qualifier
Te Aroha Eels v Randwick Kingfishers
Elimination Final
Wainuiomata Lions v University Hunters

WWW.WRL.ORG.NZ



VODAFONE WARRIORS V DRAGONS

SAT 8TH AUGUST 2015* / WESTPAC STADIUM

*subject to NRL confirmation

CAPTAIN'S CLUB LOUNGE (LEVEL 2 LOUNGE)

Enjoy match day in style with our premier hospitality option. Located on Level 2, the Captain's Club Lounge provides you with the perfect environment in which to entertain clients and guests. With exceptional catering, player appearances and exclusive post-match entertainment the Captain's Club Lounge offers the best of Vodafone Warriors hospitality.

Package includes:

- Reserved table for 10 with premium match-day seating;
- Hospitality for 1.5 hours pre-match, during the match and 1 hour post-match;
- Four course menu including entrée, buffet main, dessert and cheeseboard;
- A selection of wine, beer and non-alcoholic beverages;
- A dedicated Master of Ceremonies and special guest speakers;
- Exclusive post-match function with player appearances and live entertainment;
- Match programmes;
- Host service

Price: **\$2,995 +GST** per table of 10 (all inclusive) **\$295 +GST** per person

SIR PETER LEITCH LOUNGE (WELLINGTON RUGBY LOUNGE)

Be entertained by the one and only Sir Peter Leitch, the 19th Vodafone Warrior. Located right in the heart of the stadium with the best view of the Stadium, the Sir Peter Leitch Lounge offers exclusive lounge access, a cash bar and variety of catering options.

Package includes:

- Exclusive access to the Sir Peter Leitch Lounge for 1.5 hours pre-match and 1 hour post-match function with live entertainment;
- Exclusive Sir Peter Leitch appearance and Q&A session (at additional cost);
- Networking opportunities with fellow Sir Peter Leitch Lounge guests

SOLD OUT

and beverage at additional cost)

CORPORATE SUITES (LEVEL 4)

Located on Level 4, our Corporate Suites offer unparalleled views of the on-field action and a full service match-day experience. Treat your clients and colleagues to delicious catering and a variety of beverages in your very own Corporate Suite. Choose from 16, 20 or 24 person suites – the perfect option for those that value both privacy and luxury.

Package includes:

- Premium reserved covered seating on Level 4 balcony
- Extensive catering & beverage options
- Personal service of a dedicated steward
- Corporate VIP entry
- Match programmes

Price: 16-person **\$3,200 +GST** 20-person **\$4,000 +GST** 24-person **\$4,800 +GST** (food and beverage at additional cost)

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Bill Whitehead QSM

By Will Evans



Bill Whitehead has been described as the most decorated man in New Zealand Rugby League – and as the holder of life memberships with nine different Rugby League bodies (and another in Bowls), a Queen's Service Medal and a string of other honours, it's fairly safe to say there's no hyperbole in that statement.

But the recognition is thoroughly deserved. Christchurch-based Whitehead, known affectionately as 'Rugby League Bill', has given up thousands upon thousands of hours of his own time in over 60 years of service to the game as a manager and administrator, along with some notable cameos as a player and referee.

Whitehead was born in Reefton in 1931, and lived in the West Coast town of Inangahua until 1947. He was a keen follower of Rugby League as a youngster – recalling in great detail his uncle, Bill Clark, out-sprinting All Blacks legend George Nepia to score a try for Inangahua against Canterbury in 1937, and watching a Ray Nuttall-inspired West Coast side defeat the touring Great Britain 'Indomitables' in '46 – but it was a familiar example of bureaucracy from the then-amateur Rugby Union that permanently pushed him towards the 13-a-side code.

"We didn't have schoolboy Rugby League on the Coast, but I played Rugby Union in Nelson after we shifted there in 1947," Whitehead recalled.

"I played two years for them in '47-48, but I ran a professional mile in 1949, and I got given (the equivalent of) two dollars and a ribbon. That made me a 'professional', so I couldn't play Rugby Union anymore. I had to wait until I moved to Christchurch in 1951 and the following year I played Rugby League for Papanui reserves."

Marist (known as Marist-Western Suburbs from 1968) formed in 1952, and Whitehead began a long association with the club soon afterwards, firstly as a player for the reserves side, then as a team manager, vice-president, secretary and – from 1982 to '85 – president.

He was made a life member of the club in 1981, and became a life member of the New Zealand Marist Rugby League Association in '97 after holding several high-ranking posts for that organisation.

"I managed the premiers for three years, and in my

first year I told Jim Amos, the famous coach, about a player in reserves he should have a look at. Jim said, 'just make sure you've got the jerseys'. So I quickly learned my place," he laughed.

Whitehead managed one appearance for the club's premier side – as an emergency replacement in 1965.

"We got to Hornby and we were one player short. (Coach) Father Pearce said, 'I'll have to find a pair of boots'; he was going to play himself. I said, 'I'm ahead of you!'. So I got to play my one and only premier game.

"We got beaten 20-0, and I remember it like it was yesterday. They had three Kiwis in their side – Ian Drayton, John Bray and Brian Langton. I went into the Hornby rooms and said to (Test winger) Langton, 'you won't get any tries today'. He said, 'why not?', and I said, 'because I'm marking ya!'"

The harsh realities of maintaining grassroots clubs in Canterbury means Marist-Western Suburbs has not fielded a premiers side since 1996; the once-thriving club now only has a team in the CRL's Division One competition, a development that clearly cuts deep for Whitehead.

"Tremendously disappointing. We talked about Marist and Papanui combining, and us running the schoolboys section here at Bishopdale Park and (Papanui) could run the open grades. But that didn't get out of our clubrooms," Whitehead lamented.

"It's a bloody shame, because there's plenty of room in this area with kids running around who could do with a start. I recently made a presentation to (Kiwi Test representative) Lewis Brown, who started out playing on Bishopdale Park at four and a half years old – he was very impressive even then."

Whitehead was also the manager or local manager for over 300 teams. He was twice the local manager for Australia, Great Britain and France, and Wales once, during the national sides' visits to Christchurch, a role he fulfilled for countless touring New Zealand and Australian representative teams. He was local manager for Kiwis sides in 1971, '77 and '80, while he managed the Kiwi Schoolboys four times during the 1980s – including on a tour of Australia in '86.

Continued on next page...

Continuation of story on Bill Whitehead QSM...

But his most lasting association was as the local manager for every visiting West Coast team from 1964-89, an enduring and amicable partnership that led to a genuine career highlight in 1987, when he was awarded the Queen's Service Medal by then-Governor-General Sir Paul Reeves.

"I was on tour in Australia managing the Kiwi Schoolboys side when I got word of that. It's funny that, because I wrote to the Canterbury Rugby League to thank them for the nomination but I found out later it was the West Coast that nominated me.

"I was chatting away to (Reeves), and he said, 'another Rugby League man' – he'd just given (a QSM) to Johnny Lloyd, my old mate from Hornby. I said, 'I wanted to ask you, where do the workers go for a beer after the ceremony? We don't drink champagne and that kind of stuff. He said, 'as a matter of fact, neither do I – I usually have a keg out the back, and if you hang back I'll have one with you. So me and Johnny had a couple of beers with Sir Paul Reeves."

A life membership nod from the New Zealand Rugby League followed in 1998.

"That meant a lot, of course; there was the odd person – mainly from Auckland – that said I didn't deserve it (laughs), but that didn't worry me a hell of a lot."

Whitehead has had significant involvement with other sports, including his role as the media manager of weightlifting at the 1974 Commonwealth Games, coordinating the Rugby League Night in conjunction with the Canterbury Park Trotting Club for 30 years, and being tournament convenor for the Canterbury Licensed Trade Bowls Club, the latter earning him a 10th life membership.

But his heart lies with Rugby League, and Whitehead's enormous contribution to the code at junior levels have brought him just as much pride and enjoyment as rubbing shoulders with some of the game's greats.

Among many, many stories of his tireless efforts was the time when he organised raffles and sponsors (including Air New Zealand) to get a Canterbury 8-year-old side to Auckland, where they played against Ellerslie and Mt Albert.

He also displayed a sharp eye for talent-spotting on occasion.

"I was invited to pick five or six up-and-coming players from Canterbury to take to Cromwell to play

the Kawarau Bears, with the rest of the team coming from Mosgiel. Future Kiwis Esene Faimalo and Logan Edwards were among them, as were two New Zealand Marist reps, and Russell Tuuta, who later played for New Zealand Maori.

"I was quite pleased with the five I picked, with all of them ending up with New Zealand in front of their names within five years."

Still a passionate follower of the modern game at the elite level, Whitehead has revelled in the recent success of the Kiwis. "It's marvellous. And I watch the Warriors every weekend; I send messages up there to the team. I'm thrilled with the way young Shaun Johnson is going at present." But he had no hesitation in nominating a hero of yesteryear as his all-time favourite.

"My idol was Mel Cooke, who was the best footballer I've seen in the South Island and the best forward without any doubt; the second would probably be Charlie McBride.

"I used to pass Mel on the roads all the time – he did a hell of a lot of running. I used to say they named Pound Road after him, because he was always pounding (the pavement)."

After a lifetime of toiling for the New Zealand Rugby League community, the regular duties have eased off for Whitehead – although he is still in demand for presentations, such is his standing in Canterbury.

"The Pat Smith Trophy that they play for now (in the CRL premiership), I actually bought out of the petty cash at Tattersall Hotel. I've been invited to present that this year, so hopefully I'm well enough to do that; climbing stairs these days is a bit of a bugger."

A remarkable milestone was celebrated during a South Island Kiwis reunion at Gary Clarke's museum in Woolston in December, when Sir Peter Leitch took it upon himself to recognise Whitehead's 60 years of service to Rugby League. In a typically generous gesture, Sir Peter presented Whitehead with an engraved trophy and a voucher to take his family out to Christmas dinner – an indication of the esteem some of the game's finest servants hold 'Rugby League Bill' in.

NZRL chief executive Phil Holden also sent a letter thanking Whitehead for his six decades of service.

Continued on next page...

Continuation of story on Bill Whitehead QSM...

"You don't go looking for recognition, but it's nice when it happens," Whitehead said matter-of-factly, while adding that "friendship" was his main motivator for selflessly giving so much of his time for the benefit of others.

It's obvious the future of Rugby League is very close to his heart, however, and that Whitehead is loath to see the foundations he and others have laid for junior and grassroots football go to waste, concluding with this pointed reminder:

"I keep telling the clubs, that's where the Mel Cookes come from. Grassroots are the most important part of our game. I'll always appreciate my involvement with schoolboy football, and that's where the great players come from."



Rugby League Legend Bill Whitehead QSM

Power of Dreams Breakfast

THE POWER Of Dreams Breakfast: " On Wednesday 12th August 1975 our very own Sir John Walker was the first man in history to break the 3min 50sec mile barrier. Sir John achieved this outstanding feat in Gothenburg, Sweden in a time of 3.49.4.

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To mark this wonderful occasion Honda NZ and the John Walker Find Your Field of Dreams Foundation are holding a Celebratory Breakfast on the 12th August 2015, exactly 40 years to the day. Enjoy a full breakfast while hearing from Sir John and Sir Ralph Norris speak on the "power of dreams" and achieving business and sporting excellence. Listen to anecdotes from special guests who witnessed this historic event. MC Mark Watson (Radio Sport host) will keep you entertained chatting with Sir John and the likes of Ivan Agnew, Dick Quax and Arch Jelly (Sir John's one and only ever coach). Sir Peter Snell will be interviewed in a live link-up and Lord Sebastian Coe will be joining us pre-recorded.

Book a table for you and your clients/friends to hear from these legends and show your support for New Zealand youth in sport and help build our future champions.

All proceeds from the Celebratory Breakfast will support the Youth In Sport initiatives of the John Walker Find Your Field of Dreams Foundation which engages over 60,000 young people from Auckland south. Programmes include Community Swim, Primary Sport, Secondary Sport and Throw For Gold.

When: Wednesday 12th August 2015 Registration from 7.00am

Where: Lower NZI Room, Aortae Convention Centre, Auckland

Book a Table: \$900 (includes gist) or individual places \$95 (includes gist)

Registrations: Tickets available at Ticketmaster.co. NZ or 0800 111 999

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Sir Ralph Norris, Former CEO ASB Bank, Air NZ
and Commonwealth Bank of Australia

When

Wednesday 12th August 2015

Registration from 7am, with event commencing at 7:20am

A full breakfast will be served.



Where

Lower NZI Room, Aotea Convention Centre, Auckland



Book a table

\$900.00 (inc gst) for a table of ten.



Book individual places

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All proceeds from the Honda Power of Dreams breakfast will support the Youth In Sport initiatives of the John Walker 'Find Your Field of Dreams' Foundation.



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Tickets available at Ticketmaster.co.nz

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Given a Taste of Kiwi

By Micheal Burgess - **Courtesy of Herald on Sunday**

In many ways, it was the week that put league on the map in this country. A special Kiwis team full of names that have endured across decades captured the imagination of the sporting public. Michael Burgess reports.

In many ways, it was the week that put league on the map in this country. A special Kiwis team full of names that have endured across decades captured the imagination of the sporting public. Michael Burgess reports.

It seems unthinkable now. On the eve of the third rugby league test between Australia and New Zealand at Carlaw Park in 1985, Kiwis coach Graham Lowe dropped off his side at the bottom of Queen St in Auckland and told them they were “going for a walk”.

It was a walk, though, with a difference. Lowe, who became famous for his motivational tactics as a coach, had called Radio I and several other stations to let the public know what was happening. Office workers came streaming out of their workplaces, while onlookers shook hands, cheered and clapped the team.

“We started walking as a team and soon it felt like the whole city came out to see us,” says Kurt Sorensen. “People wanted to slap us on the back, shake our hands, went out of their way to talk to us. You can’t describe that feeling unless you were there.”

“By the time we reached the Civic Theatre, I knew we would crush them, no matter who we were playing,” says Lowe.

They were playing the mighty Kangaroos, a team stacked with stars.

The Kiwis came close to beating Australia in 1982 and the following season broke a 12-year drought with a famous 19-12 victory at Lang Park. In 1984, they whitewashed the touring Great Britain side 3-0 and the Kiwis were becoming known outside the confines of their sport.

These were very different times. With no television coverage of the Winfield Cup, local league fans hired weekly highlights tapes from video stores.

The grand final was broadcast almost a week later on Sport on One or Sunday Grandstand, as were State of Origin highlights. But there was a growing audience - and interest - that culminated in the 1985 transtas-

man series.

The first test at Lang Park was a thriller. Both sides scored some wonderful tries but focus fell on two ugly incidents.

Firstly, Kiwis captain Mark Graham was taken out of the game, blindsided by a swinging arm from debutant (and current Bulldogs scout) Noel Cleal, which went unpunished.

The second was the infamous sideline stoush between Kevin Tamati and Greg Dowling, after both had been sinbinned late in the match.

It added spice to the rest of the series, played at Carlaw Park. Before that, the Kangaroos beat the South Island 56-0 in Christchurch and Central Districts 24-4 in Wellington - not that they needed any tuning up given they were coming off Origin and featured the likes of Wally Lewis, Mal Meninga, Wayne Pearce, Paul Vautin and Des Hasler.

“We knew we could match them,” says Graham. “They didn’t have that unbeatable aura of the past.”

The Kiwis conducted training runs on Takapuna beach close to their hotel and at Fowlds Park in Mt Albert, from where the players would race each other back across the bridge, with Kevin Tamati, driving the forwards’ van, rarely beaten.

In the hotel, hooker Howie Tamati and halfback Clayton Friend practiced scrum feeds (“It was contested scrums in those days,” explains Tamati) while Graham hosted cards sessions in his room.

The team had a core of English-based professionals, including the Hull trio of Gary Kemble, James

Leuluai and Dane O’Hara and a quintet based in Sydney. But, improbably as it sounds, more than one-third were from the domestic scene; freezing workers, a storeman and a forklift driver, mostly drawn from Auckland’s Fox Memorial competition.

“We were getting about \$100 a week in camp plus a win bonus,” says Hugh McGahan. “Some guys had to take time off work but it was the pride, the honour of

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That pride soared when the team were told they would be getting together with the All Blacks, who were building up for a Bledisloe Cup game in Auckland the same weekend.

Coach Brian Lochore had invited counterpart Graham Lowe for a casual drink and had no problem when Lowe suggested he would bring his team as well.

However, just after Lowe had instructed his players to get their "No 1 tracksuits on" he received a call from the All Blacks manager, who sternly suggested the invitation was for Lowe alone.

Auckland was buzzing with test-match fever, with Carlaw Park sold out days ahead of the Sunday, 2.30pm kickoff.

"It was a special occasion," remembers Allen McLaughlin, who assisted Des White in commentary for 1ZB. "The concrete terraces were packed, as was the wooden Railway Stand, while people stood six and seven deep on the No 2 ground."

After the traditional softening up period, the Kiwis completely dominated. Leuluai finished off a 60m move, with the ball passing through nine sets of hands, to give the Kiwis a 6-4 lead after 20 minutes.

Olsen Filipaina, picked from reserve grade at the Roosters, was having the game of his life, creating havoc with his trademark bumping runs, sidesteps and delicate chip kicks.

"No one else had ever outplayed [Wally Lewis] . . . until I came along," says Filipaina.

"When I got back to Sydney after the series, people were saying, 'good on you, Olly.'"

The Kiwis created numerous chances but while the clock ticked on, the scoreboard didn't.

They had tries disallowed (one by an overly-impartial local touch judge) and bombed several other opportunities. But it didn't seem to matter, as Australia could barely get a foothold in the game.

Then, barely 90 seconds from time, came the pivotal moment.

"We didn't get to our kick and turned the ball over just over halfway," says Graham. "What happened next was a nightmare..."

Australia took advantage of the momentary confusion and the ball was fed to Lewis.

"I knew he was going to try a long pass - I could see it," says McGahan. "I went for the intercept but the speed of the ball was tremendous. It flew beyond me."

Lewis sent Garry Jack away. There was cover, but it all descended on Jack, leaving winger John Ribot free to dive across in the corner.

The hush around the ground was deafening. No one could believe what they had seen and men were in tears. Meanwhile, across town, a 9-year-old Stacey Jones had been listening to the live radio broadcast in his Point Chevalier bedroom.

"It was on television delayed but I was gutted before watching it," says Jones. "I didn't say anything to my parents but I was devastated."

The Kiwis dressing room was like a morgue. Kevin Tamati, one of the hardest men to play for his country, put a towel over his head to hide the tears. "It absolutely tore me apart," says Tamati.

"It was one of those sporting moments but, at the time, you were thinking, 'what the f**k happened there?'"

Cousin Howie Tamati was physically sick. "I had nothing more to give," he says. "I'd lost close games to Australia before but not to the same emotional level."

In the corridor, Lewis embraced Lowe, as the Kiwis coach was trying to talk to media.

"I'm sorry, mate, that it had to happen to you," said Lewis. "I could think of a lot of other blokes I'd far rather this had happened to."

According to the 1985 Autex Rugby League Annual, even the Australian media were sympathetic, with 'The Best Side Lost' and 'Home on a Wing and a Fullback' among headlines the next day. But that was scant consolation for the Kiwis team, with Lowe one of the most disconsolate.

Mark Graham took some of the training sessions early the next week before Lowe, in an emotional team meeting, apologised for his distance.

The Kiwis set their mind to restoring pride. They tried to physically exorcise the demons - in one training session, Graham led them through "100 shuttle runs" - but Lowe sensed the team were flat.

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“They felt like they had let the country down and I knew that wasn’t the case,” he says.

Then came Lowe’s masterstroke and the walk along Queen St.

A pre-match haka was discussed before the third test but then discounted (“We only did the haka on tour,” explains Graham). But the team decided to take the unprecedented step of applauding the crowd before kickoff.

It turned Carlaw Park into a cauldron.

“They all rose as one,” remembers Graham. “For a moment, it felt like they were all going to come on to the field.”

“There was a wave of emotion that came over the ground - you could feel it,” says Howie Tamati. “At that point, we felt we could beat anybody.”

The match was nirvana for league fans. The Kiwis were almost impeccable, with rock-solid defence and eager attack.

They led 8-0 at the break, during which scores of fans gathered behind the Railway Stand. From there, they could smell the liniment and hear the team talks delivered by Lowe and Australian coach Terry Fearnley.

The remarkable 1.68m Friend was the man of the hour, scoring two tries and at one stage burrowing into a scrum to retrieve the ball, before emerging out the other side and sprinting away from the shocked Australians.

The Kiwis led 14-0 soon after halftime and extended it to 18-0 before the end.

“Mark [Graham] and Hugh [McGahan] kept yelling ‘no points, no points,’” says Howie Tamati. “We were determined not to let them cross our line.”

The Kangaroos were held scoreless for the first time in 67 years.

Asked how it felt, after the despair seven days earlier, Kevin Tamati simply said: “How does it feel to walk on water?”

Earlier, most of the team had completed an impromptu haka in front of, and with, their fans.

“I remember someone saying in the dressing room - it might have been Mark - ‘we will always remember this moment. It will go down in history,’” recalls Sorensen. “He was right.”

“It was one of the best weeks of my life,” says Lowe, “just watching them grow as men. And I will never repay them for what they did for me.”

League in this country would never be the same again. In 1987, Darrell Williams became the first Kiwi to win an Australian grand final and Gary Freeman (Tigers) and Brett Todd (Raiders) also featured on Australian league’s biggest day in the late 1980s.

By 1989, State of Origin was broadcast live in New Zealand and the prime-time grand final that year captivated a huge audience.

“Graham Lowe and his team generated interest in the Kiwis like never before,” says McLaughlin.

“I think it was a series that turned the game, turned New Zealand league back then,” says Filipaina. “We had been down the bottom of the ladder and that series brought us up to the top, close to Australia. It has gone on from there.”

“The camaraderie stands out for me,” says Friend. “We didn’t have the big bucks and played at muddy Carlaw Park but that series was the whole package.

The close game in the first, the loss in the second but then to dig deep and not spit the dummy and give them a hiding in the third . . . that was special.”



Kevin Tamati led a haka, backed by Joe Ropati, Hugh McGahan and Olsen Filipaina, after the Kiwis hammered Australia 18-0 in the last test of 1985 at Carlaw Park. Photo / NZ Herald.

Courtesy of Herald on Sunday



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The NRL is about to take Napier by Storm

By John Deaker



THE MELBOURNE Storm and St George Illawarra will make history for the Hawkes Bay region this Saturday night when Napier's McLean Park hosts the area's first ever NRL match.

Round 20 was initially meant to be a home match for Melbourne but the Storm and Napier City Council confirmed the change of venue back in February. The amendment came about after the Storm's management had sought a partner to stage a Storm 'home' game outside of Melbourne for the first time and was subsequently contacted by the Napier Council.

The Napier Council's financial contribution to secure the match is undisclosed at this stage but is expected to be well into six-figures. It comes from the events budget that also helped McLean Park to secure last year's All Black test against Argentina – a match that ended up attracting 23,000 people.

One of the interesting side-stories to the scheduling of this match is actually that rugby union has had to 'play ball' and help accommodate the match ; the Ranfurly Shield match between Hawkes Bay and Mid-Canterbury was initially scheduled for Friday the 24th but it's been shuffled forward a day now to Thursday the 23rd.

There is no shortage of reasons why this match could be attractive to local league fans despite it not being a Warriors match or a Kiwis test. High up the list must surely be the ability to see two players going head-to-head who'll be remembered as great captains of their respective countries, Cameron Smith and Benji Marshall.

The 'return home' of Storm player (and former Hastings Boys High School Student) Tohu Harris to the Hawkes Bay area is also being touted as a feature of the match.

There will be many other Kiwis on display including Kevin Proctor, Jesse Bromwich and Kenny Bromwich for the Storm plus Jason Nightingale for the Dragons.

Melbourne's superior ties to New Zealand might see them get more support from the Napier crowd, though you wouldn't bet against a number of buses rolling in to town from Whakatane to support Benji Marshall - despite the 5 hour bus drive that it is from Whakatane to Napier.

Helping the prospects for the match is also the fact that both Melbourne and St George are still well in contention for the finals series with the Storm currently 5th and the Dragons sitting 2 points outside the top eight in 9th place. The match kicks off at 7.30pm local time.

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Week in Northland Sport

By Ben Francis



Rugby Union

FOR THOSE not aware I currently do an internship at Big River FM a community radio station based in Dargaville and last Friday, on the sports show, Allen Dennis (co-host) and myself were fortunate enough to interview new Northland head Coach Richie Harris about the up and coming ITM Cup Season. Northland named their ITM cup squad last Wednesday which featured six players who spent time with Super Rugby teams in the 2015 season.

Disappointing for Northland rugby fans with Dan Pryor expected to likely miss half the ITM cup season with his arm injury picked up playing with the Highlanders, but Dan Bowden (Blues) and Jone Macalai (Crusaders) are hopeful for round one against Hawke's Bay. Also the availability of Jack Ram is still unknown as he is currently with the Tongan national team.

Harris spoke about his goals in his first year of coaching Northland saying that he hopes to get these players thinking about their futures in rugby, developing their games to try get more Northland representatives in Super Rugby.

Semi Final games for the Southern Districts Premiers, Reserves and Division 2 were played on the weekend.

Firstly the Premiers final will see the top two teams from the regular season face off in the final. Mid Northern had a 32-0 win over Otamatea but it was no easy win. Welsford had a tough 39-26 win over Mid Western.

Both these sides faced each other twice in the regular season back in round 2 Welsford pipped Mid Northern 21-19 and in Round 8 both sides played out a 25all draw, so expect a close hard fought final between the two most deserving teams.

Mid Northern rugby fans will be happy after their reserves team made the final also, they beat HoraHora 32-12 and Otamatea beat Welsford 29-17.

Same as the Premiers both Mid Northern and Otamatea were the top qualifiers. Mid Northern won the two regular season matchups so between the two sides, 22-14 back in Round 5 and 25-17 in round 11.

In the Division 2 semi finals Pipiwai upset Whangaruru avenging the 88-3 defeat Whangaruru put on them only 10 weeks ago. It was the first game since May 30 Whangaruru had played due to byes and default wins.

The other semi final was between Kaihu and Southern, I actually went and watched this game and I personally enjoyed it a lot. For those who are not aware Kaihu and Southern are two big rivals so it was exciting to see both these sides face off. Kaihu made the playoffs for the first time in a long time, and their only two defeats in the regular season were against Southern. Things look promising for Kaihu at halftime leading 18-12 due to some brilliant counter attack running by the outside backs. In the second half Southern muscled up, dominated scrums and line outs to pull away 24-18 and qualify for the final.

Southern and Pipiwai played twice this season splitting the season series Southern winning 55-7 back in round 1 and in round 10 Pipiwai winning 24-19.

All finals games will be played at Toll Stadium this weekend. The Reserves final will be kicking off at 11:00am whilst the Division 2 final will kick off at 1:00pm, finally the Premier final will kick off at 3:00pm. It will cost \$5 to attend the finals or if you are Northland member it's free. Head to Toll Stadium to watch some entertaining rugby.

It's also semi finals time in the Bay Of Islands and Mangonui divisions. In the Bay Of Islands KeriKeri will host United KawaKawa at KeriKeri and Ohaewai will host Moerewa and Ohaewai RFC. Both games are a 2:00pm Kick off. The Mangonui semi finals are Awanui hosting Motokohu at Awanui RFC and Eastern will host Te Rarawa at Taipa. Both those are a 2:30pm kick off.

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Rugby League

THE HIKURANGI Stags showed once again why they are the minor premiers after the latest round in the Scott Electrical Premiership. Hikurangi extended their winning streak to seven after another convincing win, this time over the Muriwhenua Falcons 30-8. Takahiwai Warriors remain in the hunt for a major semi-final after they had a big win over Otangarei Knights, the final score was 36-10. Hokianga Pioneers kept their top six chances alive after they beat the HoraHora Broncos 30-16. It was the first game Hokianga had played since the devastating injury to Andre Leonex two weeks ago. In the other game Moerewa Tigers won by default over the Northern Wairoa Bulls which ends any chance the Bulls have of making the playoffs. This weekend is the final round of the Scott Electrical Premiership with plenty to play for. Will be an exciting last round.

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THIS WEEK IN BIG LEAGUE'S ROUND 20 ISSUE...

Darius Boyd's change from reluctant star to team leader

FEATURES

- **Darius Boyd** started his career with a premiership and has experienced success at every level but it's only now that he's accepted his role as a leader and senior player and relishing being in that position;
- **The Bulldogs** have their second Belmore game this Sunday to celebrate their 80 years in the premiership. Matt Cleary spent some time on the hill in Round 16 and reflects on what it means for the club and its fans;
- The Melbourne Storm take a home game to Napier in New Zealand this weekend. We spoke with **Tohu Harris** who hails from nearby and who designed the club's jersey for this match;
- **Penrith** are giving back to the local community this weekend by donating \$10 from every adult ticket to the Nepean Hospital family room;
- **Referees** cop it nearly every weekend but we found a young kid who's still putting everything into learning the trade with the hopes of one day being on the NRL stage;

PLUS... **Greg Alexander** names the fives players who could prove the difference for their team's premiership hopes; **Matt Elliott** takes a look at what styles teams may start to adopt in the run to the finals; **Nathan Brown** takes a look at the top three teams and where the chinks may be in their armour.

AND: Official team lists; Warren Smith's Big Clash preview of Bulldogs v Sharks; News: Panthers hurting with lack of depth in lower tier, Knights sticking to their plans for the future, Ennis the reason for Sharks lift, Mateo planning on sticking around; Who's That Kid? Cowboys' Braden Uele; Top 8 homecomings; Origin III poster; Dragons v Broncos cheerleaders.



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2. 20 Years Drink Bottle
3. Nines Shorts - 38
4. Stripped Polo - S
5. Warriors Training Cap

Fourth Prize:

1. Training Cap
2. 20 Years Drink Bottle
3. Stripped Polo - S

Fifth Prize:

1. Training Cap
2. 20 Years Drink Bottle
3. Chest Stripped Polo



To be in to win a 1 of 5 prize packs just send a stamped, addressed envelope or postcard to me in the mail with your name, address, phone number on the back to the address.

Great Canterbury Giveaway
 P.O Box 54295
 The Marina 2144,
 Manukau, Auckland

Name:
 Address:
 Phone Number:



THE PASS

Limited Edition Framed Jersey Signed by Nathan Friend Bid via Trade Me Auction

In honour of Friendly's back flip through-the-legs mid air pass against the Storm we have commissioned a framed upside down number 9 jersey signed by the man himself.



MANU VATUVEI 10 OUT OF 10

Limited Edition Print Signed by Manu Vatuvei \$950 RRP or \$855 members price

Celebrating the incredible NRL record of 10 or more tries in 10 consecutive seasons. Each of the 10 limited edition prints are individually signed by Manu himself in permanent silver ink.



MANU VATUVEI 200 NRL GAMES

Limited Edition Print Signed by Manu Vatuvei \$295 RRP or \$265.50 members price

Manu Vatuvei 'The Beast' Vodafone Warrior # 115 Celebrating 200 NRL games for the Vodafone Warriors.

www.WarriorsStore.co.nz

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

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