

20 YEARS  
VODAFONE



# Sir Peter Leitch's Mad Butcher Club

AT MT SMART STADIUM, HOME OF THE MIGHTY VODAFONE WARRIORS

## Newsletter

29<sup>th</sup> July 2015

#83

To subscribe or unsubscribe email: [stephan.maier@medstar.co.nz](mailto:stephan.maier@medstar.co.nz)

### In Wellington To Promote The Vodafone Warriors Vs Dragons - Saturday August 8<sup>th</sup>

ON MONDAY I flew down to Wellington on the 6am flight to promote the Vodafone Warriors game V Dragons coming up at Westpac Stadium on Saturday the 8th of August the star attraction on the day was Beau Ryan former Tigers and Cronulla Sharks player but now a star on the NRL Footy Show in Australia on Channel9 shown in NZ on Sky Sport on Thursday nights he was joined by Konrad Hurrell who was filming for the Code on Maori TV. It's was a full on day from meeting catching up with fans at the Wellington railway Station to meeting the Minister of Sport Jonathan Coleman on the steps of Parliament. Heading out to Weta Workshop were Beau had a make over before heading into the city to engage with the fans .the day was topped of with Beau jumping into Wellington harbour with some Vodafone Warriors fans. A BIG thank you to Wellington tourism who helped make it all happen.



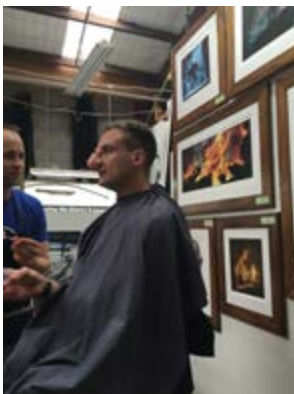
Beau meets the Butchers mate, Fats, at the railroad Station.



I had to do a selfie with Beau in the special Vodafone Warriors Wellington beanie and scarf you can get on [www.WarriorsStore.co.nz](http://www.WarriorsStore.co.nz).



Beau's make over starts at Weta Workshop.



His nose is growing.



And the work continues...



The finished job.

The NRL Footy Shows Screens On SKY Sport 2, Thursday Night (Replayed On SKY Sport 1 - 12PM Friday & Sky Sport 2 At 7PM And SKY Sport 2 Saturday At 4). Code Screens On Maori TV Thursday Night 8.30PM And Replays On Sunday At 2.30PM).



Beau ready to take on the Wellington public.



The boys held a press conference in the city and got mobbed by the media.



Beau does love the selfies.



Beau doing an interview with One's Breakfast TV outside the railway Station.



Beau interviews Minister of Sport Jonathan Coleman at Parliament.



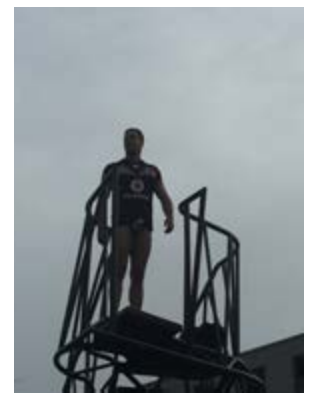
I got to meet the legend Bill Whitehead's daughter at the Station.



The fans loved meeting the boys.



Josephine enjoyed meeting Beau.



Beau about to jump in rather than me, as it was bloody cold in Wellington.



Beau pushes the guy from The Crowd Goes Wild into the drink – very funny.



The dive team, from left, Earle Betty, Damian Jacobs, the star of the show Beau, Charles Simpson and Stuart Thorn, who all did bombs. Well done guys, true Warriors.





# WELLINGTON SUPPORTER RANGE

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# Wellington's Support Will be Important As The Warriors Chase A Finals Spot

By John Deaker



**T**HE NEW Zealand Warriors will head to Wellington next weekend to take on St George in what is shaping up as a crucial match for their chances of making the NRL's finals series. With six matches to go (including three home games) it's likely three wins could get the Warriors into the Playoffs. That makes it hard to over-state the importance of winning the home match at Westpac Stadium on August the 8th against the tenth placed Dragons.

The Wellington area has often talked up their ability to permanently host an NRL team but that expansion doesn't seem likely to happen in the foreseeable future. The New Zealand Warriors' decision to play a competition match in the Capital the last few years has given Wellingtonians a chance to prove their passion for rugby league. The matches have also served as an indication that the Warriors club respects and realises the responsibility that goes with the 'New Zealand' tag they've run with in recent years rather than the 'Auckland Warriors' name they had in their formative years.

Wellington's support for the Auckland based team was brilliant back in 2013 when over 30,000 fans turned out to Westpac Stadium to watch the Warriors' 24-16 loss to the Bulldogs. The Warriors turned that result round with an emphatic 42-18 win over the Wests Tigers last year - the only downside being that the crowd had dropped away significantly to 22,000.

Although next weekend's crucial match now won't be able to utilize the wide-reaching popularity of Shaun Johnson to get bums on seats, Kiwis' legend Benji Marshall has had a strong season for St George and will be a drawcard for many hardcore fans of New Zealand rugby league to get along to the match. It's also likely that the Warriors will have two of their crowd-favourites that have been missing from the team in recent times, Manu Vatuvei and Konrad Hurrell, back on board for the Dragons clash.

Tuimoala Lolohea's opportunity in the halves is something optimistic fans could genuinely view as being a good thing for the future of the Warriors club. It's not surprising that Andrew McFadden has been reluctant to put two similar types of players like Johnson and Lolohea together in the halves. Having a more conservative player paired with Johnson (like Chad Townsend) has traditionally been viewed as being the best way to give Johnson a free license to play his natural game.

Consistent game time in the halves for Lolohea for the rest of this season may end up giving McFadden a selection headache going in to 2016. A spine of Isaac Luke, Roger Tuivasa-Sheck, Shaun Johnson and Lolohea would be an unorthodox combination to put on the park together - but while so many 'free-spirits' (or some would say 'freaks') may be difficult to control or coach, it's likely they'd be an even more difficult prospect to coach or play against.

Watching how Lolohea plays against Cronulla this weekend will be fascinating. With 20 first grade games behind him he's hopefully developed enough confidence now to be able to play in the halves at NRL level - and even know when the time is right to showcase some of the great speed and skills we know he possesses. A victory over the Sharks this week could also be huge for the Wellington match's crowd the following week by simply proving one thing: this team can win without Shaun Johnson.



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# Wellington Rugby League Has it's First Finalist - This Weekend

**W**ELLINGTON RUGBY League has its first finalist for this year's Premier Grand Final when this year's minor premiers Te Aroha Eels of Waiwhetu took on last years grand final winners the Randwick Kingfishers at Te Whiti Park, home of the Eels.

What a difference a week makes. When the Eels last played on their home ground it resembled a bog, but with Wellingtons famous wind playing it's part along with the tireless efforts of the downers ground staff meant that both teams would have the opportunity to unleash their speedsters.

With the biggest crowd of the season on hand, they saw two teams hell bent on moving the football at every opportunity.

Whilst it might have looked impressive both teams forgot that they first had to earn the right to go wide, consequently the old traditionalists at the park who back in the day played under the 5 metre rule where you could nearly reach out and shake the hand of the opposition player were left shaking their heads in disbelief.

Nonetheless points were scored, tries went begging, when the half time hooter went it was 16 each, a fair reflection of the half, although some of the comments made by both sets of supporters meant they weren't entirely confident of their teams chances come the second half.

At the half time, news was coming through from the other semi final being played at wise park that the university hunters had jumped to an early 12 nil lead but the Wainuiomata Lions had come back to take a half time lead into the sheds.

Back to Te Whiti Park and the second half . it was the eels that settled the quickest posting early points, looking to give their forwards more time with the football. Randwick responded with a converted try which was to be their only points of the half.

The eels went on to post further points ultimately taking the game 34 22, sending their supporters to the clubrooms happy.

Wellington had its first grand finalist, last years beaten grand finalist the te aroha eels. Could they go one better this year, their supporters seem to think so!

For the Te Aroha eels players that was the last thing on their minds, for now it was about warming down, getting fluids in, tending to the bruises!!

What about that game over in the lions Den.. Final score wainui 36 university 22...must have been another tough one.

At least the kingfishers knew who they would be facing next Saturday their old foe from the nui!!

The winner of that game facing off against the eels at the Westpac trust Stadium Saturday August 8th as a curtain raiser to the NZ Vodafone Warriors as they come to town to take on the St George Dragons.

See you there!!!



## Grand Final Breakfast Show

**If Your In Wellington Here Is A Great Chanch To Support Your Local Grandfinal**

Kia Ora Folks

**A**S PART of wellington rugby league grandfinal day sat 8th august the atiawa toa fm sports show crew in association with the te aroha rugby league club will be hosting a grandfinal breakfast, and broadcasting live upstairs at the te aroha hutt valley sports complex guthrie street waiwhetu from 8am.

For only \$10 per head you get a grandfinal day breakfast and the rare opportunity to listen in person to two reknowned sports show hosts [‘ in their own minds]

Regards, Wi and Star, PS let the world know, bring them all!!!



# Wellington - Te Aroha Eels vs Randwick Kingfishers



## Vodafone Warriors Old Boys Luncheon Last Week



Former Warriors at the captains run last Friday Jason Death, Stacey Jones, PJ Marsh, Justin Murphy, Monty Betham.



Jerry Seuseu, Sione Faumuina, Glen Fishiahi, Albert Vete, Raymond Faitala Mariner enjoying the Old Boys Luncheon last Friday.

PJ MARSHs kids Waverley, Braelan and Jay just might become Vodafone Warriors supporters now they have all the gear.



Robert Mears, PJ Marsh, Nathan Friend Jason Death, Aaron Whittaker front row Siliva Havili, Duane Mann, Monty Betham all hookers current and former for the Warriors.



**N**EW HALVES and back row combinations are the features of the Vodafone Warriors' reshaped line-up for their encounter with Cronulla at Mt Smart on Saturday (5pm kick-off).

With halfback Shaun Johnson sidelined for the season, head coach Andrew McFadden has moved Tuimoala Lolohea into the halves, where he played the last 55 minutes on Saturday.

Lolohea has already started at fullback, in the centres and on the wing this season.

McFadden has been forced to also make changes in the back row with Bodene Thompson out with an ankle injury and Ryan Hoffman not yet recovered from his calf complaint.

Captain Simon Mannering is moved from the loose forward's role he's filled this season to operate on the edge with Ben Matulino switching from prop to the second row, a position he filled several times last year.

Taking over in the No 13 jersey is Sebastine Ikahihifo, who ran for 159 metres from 16 runs and made 32 tackles for our New South Wales Cup side against Manly.

There are also three changes in the outsides backs with three of the club's most powerful ball runners coming back into the line-up. Manu Vatuvei is named on the left wing after being sidelined since the June 27 win over Canberra with a shoulder injury, while Konrad Hurrell is back from suspension in the centres and Ken Maumalo is recalled for his fifth NRL appearance on the wing.

There are also changes on the bench with props Charlie Gubb and Sam Lisone joining Siliva

Havili and Raymond Faitala-Mariner, while Sione Lousi and Jonathan Wright have been named as well.

"Simon and Ben will give us loads of experience and aggression in the second row while Seb demanded selection after his efforts with the NSW Cup side," said McFadden.

"Tui was a natural choice in the halves. He has trained there throughout the season when Shaun and Chad have missed training sessions.

"In Manu, Konrad and Ken we have three powerful runners back in the mix. We've really missed Manu's carries out of defence over the last few weeks, Ken has just come off four tries in a match and we all know what Koni can do. With Charlie and Sam coming on to the bench we gain more aggression and energy, which we have been missing lately. The effort against Manly was really disappointing but it's only two weeks ago that we had a great feeling in the team when we beat Melbourne. That's what we have to find again."

### **Cronulla On A roll**

Things won't be easy on Saturday, with Cronulla having won six of its last seven games to climb to sixth on the table on 24 points, while we are now eighth on 22 after losing our last two games.

The last 10 encounters between the two clubs have been split 5-5. The Vodafone Warriors have a 9-6 advantage in 15 matches played at Mt Smart while the Sharks are 18-16 ahead in 34 meetings.

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### **Fifita Brothers Banned**

Cronulla boss Lyall Gorman says the club is pressing for a resolution to an investigation into Andrew and David Fifita, the twin brothers who have been stood down for allegedly abusing a ref at a junior league game.

Both have been banned from attending Penrith Junior Rugby League matches for 12 months, and the Sharks stood them down from NRL duties this week.

Gorman said the club was trying to gather information and statements, while the players had to have time to bring in the lawyers.

"We are pressing it every minute of the day to try and get that done as quickly as we can."

The brothers were accused of physically threatening match officials.

Gorman said the club had a duty of care to the players while the process was ongoing.

"We have a welfare focus on everyone in our club. There's a duty of care and that's why we haven't made comments publicly," he said.

Sharks skipper Paul Gallen did not want to comment but also hoped for a quick resolution.

### **Your Team For Saturday**

Sam Tomkins, Ken Maumalo, Konrad Hurrell, Solomone Kata, Manu Vatuvei, Chad Townsend, Tuimoala Lolohea, Jacob Lilyman, Nathan Friend, Albert Vete, Ben Matulino, Simon Mannering, Sebastine Ikahihifo. Bench: Siliva Havili, Raymond Faitala-Mariner, Charlie Gubb, Sam Lisone, Jonathan Wright.

## What A horror Show

I am not about to dwell on Saturday's loss at the hands of Manly, but losing Shaun Johnson as we lost 32-12 just as he was scoring his eighth try of the year shows what a loss he'll be.

The 24-year-old was making his 101st appearance, and it was a cruel blow to all supporters, but most especially to Shaun himself.

Injury rate was terrible to see

As well as Shaun, of course we lost Bodene Thomposon, and he's now out too, late in the match.

Early in the night we lost promising second rower Raymond Faitala-Mariner, who was taken off after a head knock but at least was able to come back.

Poor Manly suffered too. Centre Steve Matai had to leave the field with what appeared to be a serious concussion after his head slammed into the ground. It was an awful sight, seeing it on the replay, and you did not have to be any kind of expert to know his night was over.

Another serious injury followed when Manly forward Luke Burgess was left on the ground with a serious knee injury, and soon after second rower Tom Symonds was also out of commission with a knee problem.

Manly would also lose Ligi Sao with a knee complaint, leaving it with no players on the bench for the final stages.

## Find The Positives

Even on such a grim night there were positives. Ligi Sao showed a terrific offload to set up Manly's first try, so I'm delighted he has signed to come home next season.

And it was also great to see Albert

Vete get his first NRL try, and I am certain it will not be his last.

We still had four players who gained more than 100 metres - Jacob Lillyman, Ben Matulino, Albert Vete and captain Simon Mannering - who also made 57 tackles.

## Cruel On The Night For NSW Side Too

A disallowed try in the final few minutes denied the Vodafone Warriors a comeback win over Manly in the New South Wales Cup. Paki Afu bludgeoned over and he was adamant he'd scored what would have been the match-winner, but the referee disagreed.

What was worse was that the TV replays then showed Afu had certainly scored - letting Manly hold on for the win

Going into the match the Vodafone Warriors had lost only once at home this season. But it is history now, and they must regroup because they are on the road at Newtown this weekend.

## Centre Race A tight Call

In the tightest voting so far, Clinton Toopi and Brent Tate have come through to take the two spots in the centres in the Vodafone Warriors' People's Choice 20th Anniversary Team.

Toopi was first by a reasonable margin in a field of 12 but just a few votes covered the next three Brent Tate, Nigel Vagana and Vinnie Anderson.

In the end Tate edged Vagana and Anderson in a vote that couldn't have been much closer.

The selection of Toopi and Tate follows the choice of Brent Webb

as fullback in the www.Warriors. kiwi poll while P J Marsh was chosen at hooker, Simon Mannering and Ali Lauitiiti in the second row and Steve Price and Ben Matulino as the props.

Next up will be the wings.

## Back Sir John Walker

Let's back the Sir John Walker Find Your Field of Dreams Foundation as it and sponsor Honda NZ celebrate the 40th anniversary of his being the first man through the 3min 50sec mile barrier.

What a run from a Manurewa boy - 3.49.4. And if I was in the race he would have gone faster!

Iconic businessman and top bloke Sir Ralph Norris will speak with Sir John on the power of dreams, and achieving business and sporting excellence.

You'll hear stories from special guests who witnessed the occasion, and MC Radio Sports Mark Watson will keep you entertained, plus there's a fantastic breakfast and some items signed by Sir John being auctioned.

Proceeds will support the foundation's Youth In Sport initiatives, which engage more than 60,000 young south Aucklanders. Programmes include Community Swim, Primary Sport, Secondary Sport and Throw For Gold. No doubt some of your kids will be involved.

Go to [www.aucklandlive.co.nz](http://www.aucklandlive.co.nz) for all the details. I'll look forward to seeing you there.



# Time to Honour Pete!

By Newsletter Editor in Chief David Kemeys



**T**HE VODAFONE Warriors' game against Cronulla is being dedicated to the one and only Sir Peter Leitch, our host, league dynamo and all round league good bloke.

Saturday's game is the Sir Peter Leitch Appreciation Day, with the club wanting to celebrate all he does for it – which has left him feeling a little bit embarrassed and humble, which he has no right to be, since it is as plain as the nose on your face he does more than anyone to support the Warriors.

We face the Sharks, with Mt Smart's gates open at 12.30pm for the Vodafone Junior Warriors at 12.40pm, and the main game at 5pm, and club boss Jim Doyle says the day will give “not just the club but the entire rugby league community” the chance to acknowledge Pete.

If you can think of someone who does more for the game of league, the community, and the Vodafone Warriors than Pete, bring them along to the match and I'll buy them one of those wieners that are so tasty – and I do not, as Pete would tell you, put my hand in my pocket often.

The Butch is a bit shy about it all. “I only do what I do for the love the game, the club, and because I have built a real affection for the players, who I am proud to call friends. I even had former player Jason Death staying with me when he returned for the Old Boys game at the weekend,” he told me.

“I've been involved since the Warriors started in 1995 and was blessed when the Warriors retired the No 19 jersey to me in 2001, so to be honoured again is special, given its our 20th anniversary.”

True to form, Pete reckons all the fans who turn up to support the boys through thick and thin are just as worthy of recognition.

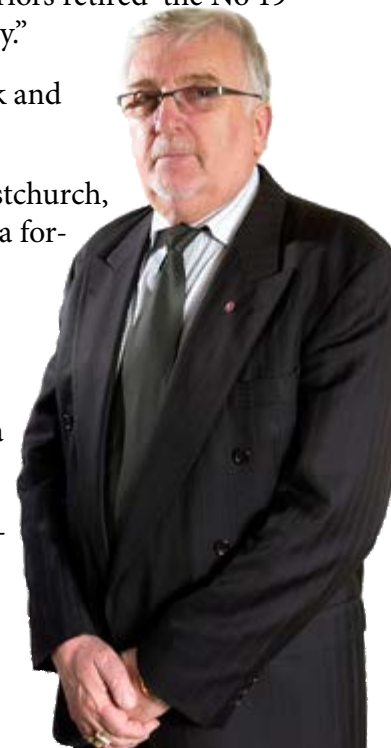
“People like Dave and Lorraine, who come up week after week all the way from Christchurch, they are the real heroes. I only drive in from Bucklands Beach, but it must cost them a fortune to be as loyal as they are.”

The day has Mad Butcher-related features, but the club is keeping the under wraps.

Sure we were not great against Manly, but when the going gets tough, the tough get going, and I reckon anyone who does not front on this special day out of respect for a top man alone, needs shooting.

And the club even has a Shark Attack membership for this one. Go to [www.Warriors-forever.co.nz](http://www.Warriors-forever.co.nz) to join. It features too many benefits to list here, not just a ticket.

Good on you Pete, don't be so modest. You deserve it.



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# Game Day Pictures



Logan Swann, Jason Death (with his sons: Cruiz, Phoenix & Levi) and Robbie Mears watch as a Haka is performed on field.



Nigel Vagana, Awen Guttenbeil and Anthony Swann line up on field as part of the old boys day celebrations in round 20.



Mark Tookey, Justin Murphy and Robbie Mears watch the NRL action.



PJ Marsh and Wade McKinnon catching up in the Red Bull tent on game day.



PJ Marsh taking the field during game day in round 20.



Steve Price taking the field during round 20.



Tony Tatupu and Duane Mann sharing a laugh on field in round 20.



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**SEALINK**







All the way from Dunedin Jalen, Craig, Mike and Tyrin. First time in the Stacey Jones lounge.



Legend Clayton Friend in the lounge.



Cruz and Phoenix



Sir Peter with former Warriors & Kiwis coach Brian Mclennan. He now does some work for Sky TV.



Jason Death who is staying at the Butchers house and leaves to go back to Sydney on Friday.



Manu and Ryan Hoffman with Sir Peter.



Former Warrior Mark Tookey.



Mount Albert Lions boys hanging with some of the Old Boys!



Old Boys Justin Murphy #92, Gavin Hill our first signing #8 and Mark Tookey #76.



Old Boy's Justin Murphy #92 Warrior, Gavin Hill 1st signing #8 Warrior and Mark Tookey #76 Warrior.



Peter McVeigh our resident DJ in the lounge with his partner Pauline.



Peter, Mel, Max, Tama, Carmen and Andre, all from the Hornby Panthers in Christchurch.





Sir Peter with Joseph Parker who came to the lounge on the weekend.



Stephen McIvor and former Kiwis Coach Brian McLennan with the Mt Albert Lions boys.



These boys came up from Christchurch and the Linwood and Halswell clubs



Tony sings Happy Birthday to Bruce and Trevor.



Trevor Bailey from Hornby Christchurch with the signed Warriors Old Boys jersey.



VJ from Christchurch and Bill from Wellington.



With the future WORLD CHAMPION Joseph Parker here in the Stacey Jones Lounge!.



## Mt Smart VIP Tour



All the fantastic Vodafone Warriors Supporters enjoying the V.I.P tour of Mt Smart Stadium!



**H**AD TO share this with our readers. Fantastic to see support from local newspapers out in South Auckland for the fight to stay at Mt Smart. Both the Manukau Courier and Papakura Courier published this article on the front pages we share with you the Manukau page.

# Manukau Courier

stuff.co.nz

Neighbourly  
www.neighbourly.co.nz

Thursday, July 30, 2015

YOUR PLACE, YOUR PAPER

## Battle to keep Warriors close

**NIGEL MOFFIET**

Keep the Warriors close to the grassroots – that’s the mission for community leaders who are taking the fight to the Auckland Council.

Local boards in the south have backed a Manurewa Local Board bid to retain Mt Smart Stadium as the home for the New Zealand Warriors rugby league team.

The boards say their members “wish to keep the Warriors and their games closer for the many players, fans and supporters who live in South Auckland”.

The move is being supported by Mangere-Otahuhu, Otara-Papatoetoe and Papakura local boards.

They are writing to Auckland mayor Len Brown and Regional Facilities Auckland to oppose plans to relocate the Warriors to North Harbour’s QBE Stadium.

Manurewa Local Board chairwoman Angela Dalton says most league players live in the south and several local clubs have told her they’re worried about the



Manurewa Local Board chairwoman Angela Dalton says the plan to move the Warriors shows the council has “lost touch with local communities”.

proposed move. The plans show the council has “lost touch with local communities”, she says.

Papakura Local Board chairman Bill McEntee says he’s strongly against the idea of moving the club to Albany as it “takes

**“It is most uplifting, knowing we have the support and backing in our campaign to retain Mt Smart Stadium as the home of the New Zealand Warriors”**

**- Warriors managing director Jim Doyle**

the game away from the heartland” of rugby league.

“It would just be so hard for families to follow over there.”

McEntee, who is also chairman of the Papakura Sea Eagles league club, says he’s been a season ticketholder since the Warriors began in 1995.

“If it went to QBE Stadium I would reassess that as it’s too far away and a dog’s breakfast to get to.”

NZ Warriors managing director Jim Doyle has written to the local boards thanking them for their support.

“It is most uplifting, knowing we have the support and backing in our campaign to retain Mt Smart Stadium as the home of the New Zealand Warriors,” he says.

In a Regional Facilities Auckland update, chief executive Robert Domm says changes are needed because Mt Smart’s infrastructure “is ageing and the associated capital costs to upgrade the venue would be significant”.

“Auckland Council could not justify a business case to fund the necessary works and the ongoing operational costs to maintain Mt Smart Stadium in the years beyond 2018,” he says.



Shaun Clark and his son Luke, 7, are big fans of the Warriors but say they will struggle to get to games if the club has to move to North Harbour.

PHOTO: NIGEL MOFFIET

## Moving will hurt fans

Shaun Clark has been going to Mt Smart Stadium to watch the Warriors since the club started 20 years ago.

The Manurewa man coaches his son Luke’s Papakura Sea Eagles under-8 league team and its members often travel to Warriors games together.

Moving the club will hurt many supporters, Clark says.

“It’ll be too far for some of the less fortunate. It’s a bit far to travel over the harbour bridge and there are no trains to get there.”

Conifer Grove resident James Parker has held Warriors season passes for three years but says that

will end if the club moves to North Harbour.

“I’ll definitely be reconsidering it but I’d have to say no, I wouldn’t – to go to the other side of Auckland and drive all that way is a big time factor.”

Parker says it will be disappointing for his whole family as he usually goes to games with his wife and three children.

Darren Brady from Harveys Real Estate Papakura has held a corporate box at Mt Smart for 12 years but he says “there’s not a hope” that would continue if the Warriors moved to QBE Stadium.

- Nigel Moffiett



Local boards want Warriors fans from the south to be able to support their team at Mt Smart Stadium.

PHOTO: FAIRFAX MEDIA

# Vodafone Warriors vs Sharks - Game Details - **THIS SATURDAY**



GAME DAY DETAILS FOR **THIS SATURDAY**

GATES OPEN 2/30PM

NYC GAME KICKS OFF AT 2-40PM

NRL VODAFONE WARRIORS V CRONULLA SHARKS KICKS OFF AT 5PM

Stacey Jones Lounge Buffet Menu - \$19.50

Serving starts 4pm

**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

# Vodafone Warriors vs Dragons - Game Details - **NEXT SATURDAY**

DETAILS FOR THE WELLINGTON GAME NEXT SATURDAY IN **WELLINGTON AT WESTPAC STADIUM**

12-30PM PREMIER WELLINGTON RUGBY LEAGUE GRAND FINAL

2-40PM NYC GAME

5PM NRL VODAFONE WARRIORS V ST GEORGE DRAGONS



## Need **Accommodation** for the **Grand Final** in Sydney?

Anyone who is looking for accommodation in Sydney for the Grand Final weekend should contact Sir Peter. He has a great deal! [Click here to contact!](#)



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# Warriors Supporters in New York

**S**O I was just in NEW YORK CITY for the last 3 weeks and while I missed 2 games I was still there in spirit, even asking old Lady Liberty for some good luck and she came through the very next night (after this picture was taken) we had that amazing game against Melbourne storm.

Funny thing was dressed up in my supporters cap and shirt I had 2 separate members of the public approach me and ask me how the Warriors were performing this year.

So you can take the girl away from the Warriors but you can't take the Warriors out of her loyalty

Hardest part was actually picking which strip to wear over there because I have about 20 shirts.

Rachael Thomson



## Competition Winners

### Panasonic Stereo Giveaway Winners



Alastair was our lucky WINNER of the PANASONIC STEREO and thanks PANASONIC who had it delivered to him the VERY next day.

**Panasonic**

### Great Canterbury Giveaway Winners

1. Victor Smith, c.- Autotreads Ltd, Onehunga
2. Ranjit Lala, Papakura
3. Kirsty Wilson, Hokitika
4. Ali Baxter, Picton
5. Miss S Payne, Henderson



Tania and victor smith the happy winners of the first prize in the great Canterbury Give away could not wait till I couriered the prize they drove around to my place within minutes to clam there prizes one very happy couple (PLEASE NOTE VICTOR IS WEARING PART OF HIS PRIZE A HERITAGE JERSEY HE COLD NIT WAIT TO PU IN ON LUCKY BUGGER)





i a Rāpare/Thursdays 8:30pm on

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## TONIGHT'S GUESTS

### KEHU BUTLER

*U18 NZ Surf Champ*

### KHAN BUTLER

*Kehu's Dad/Coach & Surfer*

### KENNY O'MALLEY

*IFB Pro Body Builder*

### TEINA O'MALLEY

*Body Builder*

### GLEN OSBORNE

*Ex CODE Presenter & All Black*

*...and KONI HURRELL catches up with the Footy show Funny man BEAU RYAN in Wellington!*



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## NAU MAI HAERE MAI

Join the crew this week and enjoy the top class guests on the CODE couch.

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**MEAN MAORI MEAN!**

# What I Do!

By Mark Ramsdale who lives in the UK

**W**HEN THE Mad Butcher got in touch and asked me to pen something for his newsletter, I was delighted. I have family in New Zealand and I am the proud owner of a first-season Warriors jumper.

I'm a passionate rugby league supporter from St Helens, but moved to London in 1997 to study. I am grateful and honoured to work in the sport and to do so in areas that can and have made a difference to rugby league.

I'm probably best known as the Secretariat to the UK Parliament's Rugby League Group ([www.apprlg.org.uk](http://www.apprlg.org.uk)). For over 25 years, this Group has met to discuss and challenge issues faced in the sport, and has been responsible for some very important turning points in the sport. In the nearly eight years I've been involved it has grown and continue to deliver that very important work. None Politicians are encouraged to join and give their thoughts.

Alongside the Group is the politicians' team – the Political Animals ([www.politicalanimals.org.uk](http://www.politicalanimals.org.uk)). We play Masters rugby league against representative and charity sides. I'm Secretary/General Manager/Dummy Half/Kitman and all the other roles that go along with running a club. With the Kiwi's visit later this year, we have written to the New Zealand High Commissioner in the UK, the Rt Hon Sir Lockwood Smith, asking him to put together a Commissioner's XIII for us to play in London on the morning of the Second Test Match on 7 November.

A year ago, I created the Rugby League Business Network ([www.rugbyleaguebusiness.net](http://www.rugbyleaguebusiness.net)). I am pleased to say we have thousands of members from all over the world, including New Zealand. Its purpose is to create relationships for people through rugby league. Just this week we announced a new programme for our members to act as mentors or provide work experience to players thinking about the days when they aren't playing anymore and have had lots of people offer their, and their firms' help.

I am Director of the Rugby League Varsity Match ([www.rlvarsity.com](http://www.rlvarsity.com)); the annual Battle of the Blues between the universities of Oxford and Cambridge. The next match will be the 36th time the clubs have faced each other and a more passionate encounter you could not imagine. The Man of the Match award is named after New Zealand hero Sir Bob Mahuta who studied and played at Oxford.

There are few other things that I do, but I'll draw the line there. If anyone wants to know more about my work, just follow me on twitter: @mark\_ramsdale or get in touch and I will add you to my own rugby league mailing list: [info@markramsdale.com](mailto:info@markramsdale.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.*

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# Parker vs Tupou

**T**HE HIGHEST ranked heavyweight fight ever staged in New Zealand is on this Saturday, with our boy Joseph Parker taking on Aussie Bowie Tupou!

If Joe can take down the big Aussie he could be in line for a spot in the World Top 5 – a huge achievement, especially considering Joe is only 23!

Also featuring on Saturday's card will be World #10 Welterweight Jeff 'The Hornet' Horn, who's been getting massive raps here and over the ditch.

He's taking on Ukrainian Viktor Plotnykov, who's ranked #11, and from what I'm told it'll be one of the best fights of the night!

There's heaps more to see as well, including Christchurch's Bowyn Morgan, Joseph Parker's training partner Izu Ugonoh and the infamous Brown Buttabean!

Take it from me, this will be one fight night you don't want to miss!

**Live on Sky Arena this Saturday at 7:30pm!**

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## Henson Park sends its good wishes for the Sir Peter Leitch Appreciation Day

Hello Sir Peter,

**E**VERYONE AT the Newtown Jets, the oldest Rugby League club in Australia, wishes to add their own contribution to the upcoming Sir Peter Leitch Appreciation Day.

Best wishes to you for Saturday at Mt Smart Stadium and I know it will be a terrific day for you.

My head is still reeling from seeing your memorabilia collection some weeks ago.

It was almost impossible to fully take in the magnitude of your superb collection.

It is one of the Wonders of the World!

The Warriors NSW Cup boys are at Henson Park this Saturday so I'll send you a match report and some photos for the newsletter.

Regards,

Glen Dwyer

Media Officer

Newtown RLFC.



**Newtown Rugby League Football Club**  
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Support Monty and his team next Thursday night!

## Be one of the first people in the country to see the new Fantastic Four movie

The Steps for Life team are thrilled to invite you to join us at a gala screening of the latest instalment of the Fantastic Four movie series. Bring your family and friends, there will be raffles and spot prizes on the night and lots of chances to win some 'fantastic' prizes.

**When: 6pm Thursday 6th August, 2015**

**Where: Hoyts Sylvia Park, Auckland**

There are limited numbers and there will be no door sales on the night so secure your seats now. Tickets are \$25 each.



It's easy to book, just click on the ticket and we'll see you at the movie!

*We look forward to seeing you on the night*

*The Steps for Life Team*



A contemporary re-imagining of Marvel's original and longest-running superhero team, centres on four young outsiders who teleport to an alternate and dangerous universe, which alters their physical form in shocking ways. Their lives irrevocably upended, the team must learn to harness their daunting new abilities and work together to save Earth from a former friend turned enemy.

Director: Josh Trank

Main Cast: Miles Teller, Kate Mara, Michael B Jordan, Jamie Bell

Genre: Action, Science Fiction



# Auckland Rugby League Womens Competition Grows

**T**HERE ARE 12 Women's teams in the Auckland Club competition this year, the most they've had for a few years, which shows growth and increased participation, but the season hasn't been without its frustrations.



The inability for the newer teams to maintain 17 or even 13 ladies to run out each Sunday has been a challenge, injuries, illness, whanau and opposition who can put 80 pts+ on you, defaulted games have resulted in weeks without for some teams.

It's becoming evident from the ladder who the possible top four teams will be with two rounds left before Semi Finals. Richmond, Papakura and Manurewa sit equal 1st with Richmond on top by points differential, Otahuhu fourth. These teams are regulars in the competition, are well coached and have players represented at regional and national levels. It makes a big difference week in week out with the Coaches ability to attract and retain a team each season.

Quality coaches are hard to get, this especially so for the Womens Grade. Clubs need to be able to provide support, extra resources and value the skill and contribution a Womens Team can bring to the Club.

Manurewa Women recently did an oppose session against their mens Premier Team giving each other a good working over. Where else would this happen? They train on prime nights Tues / Thurs on the field next to their Prems and Prems 1st, all indicators of respect to their skill level, value and place within a Rugby League Club. They maintain 20+ to every training, rain or shine, if the fields are shut they train under carpark lights and as many of the teams have experienced this season, default after default, they will train instead of taking the day off. 90% are grew up and still live in Manurewa, their Coach has won two Foxs and a Sharman Cup, all key ingredients in a team that can do well in the competition.

New teams to the comp Waitemata and the return of Te Atatu have struggled but there is hidden talent in both teams, potential to develop further if the right environment and player base can be attracted. It is crucial Auckland Womens Rugby League is strong which in turn will strengthen the National Tournament and National Team.



## ARL RD 15

### Appliance Shed Fox Memorial Premiership

Northcote 16 Pt Chevalier 32  
Glenora 14 Mt Albert 66  
Howick 16 Papakura 28  
Mangere East 14 Marist 36  
Otara 18 Otahuhu 32



### SAS Sharman Cup

Bay Roskill 42 Hibiscus Coast 14  
East Coast Bays 18 Te Atatu 28  
Ellerslie 37 Papatoetoe 33  
Glenfield 6 Richmond 86  
Mt Wellington 36 New Lynn 16  
Pakuranga 12 Manurewa 18  
Ponsonby 14 Waitemata 14  
Manukau bye.



## THIS WEEK IN BIG LEAGUE'S ROUND 21 ISSUE...

Super hero round and the finals race heats up

### FEATURES

- **The Roosters** prefer to remain out of the thick of premiership talk, but their defence is saying plenty. With figures better than 2013 and matching some of the best of the past couple of decades, they're definitely a genuine contender;

- Tigers legend **Benny Elias** has full faith that **Wests Tigers** coach Jason Taylor can bring the club through this rebuilding period. Having experienced it himself when starting in grade, Elias says time and patience will pay off;

- Six weeks left in the regular season. We mark the **games to watch** up to Round 26, which could have a drastic impact on how the final ladder ends up looking;

- He's come from Fiji to Sydney to Perth and back to Sydney, but Penrith's **Waqa Blake's** heart lies back across the country where his mum, who has almost always lived away from her family to provide for them, still remains his biggest fan;

- A **reduction to the interchange** next season has many saying the "big man" will be lost to league, but others say they'll still have their place and will simply evolve with the game;

**PLUS...** **Anthony Watmough** says it's tough to watch from the sidelines now, but that his Eels still believe they're in this season; **Matt Elliott** takes a look at the mental challenge facing the teams out of contention now; **Nathan Brown** analyses the Bulldogs and Sharks and what they need in their games to be a shot of challenging the top teams; **Tim Fuller** explains the legalities surrounding standing players down.

**AND:** Official team lists; Warren Smith's Big Clash preview of Cowboys v Raiders; News: Ballin deserves better, Stone had lost some player respect, Warriors Johnson-free challenge, Slater in the coaching box; Who's That Kid? Broncos' Jai Arrow; Top 8 2015 superhuman efforts; Wests Tigers poster; Top eight cheerleaders unveiled.



### THIS WEEK'S ISSUE

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# Call for a Marshall

By John Coffey QSM



**T**HIS IS what we call in the media business a rewrite. My original column was written on Saturday afternoon and advocated the recall of Benji Marshall to understudy Kiwis Test halfbacks Shaun Johnson and Kieran Foran on the end-of-season tour to Britain.

But the rugby league world – as far as the Warriors and Kiwis were concerned – changed dramatically a few hours later when Johnson suffered his horrific leg injury against Manly. It seems inevitable now that Marshall and Foran will be reunited behind the Kiwis pack for the first time since a 10-18 loss to the Kangaroos at Townsville in October, 2012.

That was the most recent of Marshall's 27 Tests and his 19th as captain. Since then he has been stripped of the captaincy, missed the 2013 Anzac Test through injury, was unavailable for the 2013 World Cup because of an ill-advised flirtation with rugby union, and returned to the NRL with the St George Illawarra Dragons.

I was going to point out that recalling deposed captains had not worked for previous Kiwis teams. Mark Graham was not chuffed when Dean Bell was retained as skipper for the 1988 World Cup final, and Gary Freeman reacted badly after losing his halfback spot to 19-year-old Stacey Jones at the 1995 World Cup.

Coach Stephen Kearney has been fortunate both Johnson and Foran were injury-free at the 2013 World Cup and 2014 Four Nations because their understudy, Thomas Leuluai, was buffeted by injuries at both tournaments. Now the luckless Leuluai is sidelined again and the 30-year-old Marshall is poised to come to the rescue.

When Marshall left the Wests Tigers and joined the Auckland Blues early last year most pundits drew a line under his rugby league career. Even when he back flipped into the NRL with the Dragons in mid-season, no-one got too excited. His last couple of seasons at the Tigers had, by his standards, been pretty ordinary.

Against the odds, and after a full off-season preparation, Marshall regained much of his mana in leading the Dragons to an outstanding run in the first half of this season. He has continued to earn respect even as his adopted club has lost seven consecutive matches

and fallen out of the top eight.

An Australian magazine recently came up with a ridiculous claim that Marshall was about to switch his allegiance to Scotland. That was also reported by the Stuff website in this country. Neither Marshall, nor his manager, was consulted. An annoyed Marshall pointed out he had no Scottish ancestry and was totally committed to New Zealand.

It was heartening to hear he attended the latest meeting of Sydney-based New Zealand squad members and also his assurance that everything was "fine" between him and Kearney, the man who had taken the captaincy away from him. Marshall was quoted as saying he was "in line for the end-of-season tour" and even mentioned the 2017 World Cup as a possibility.

Only Marshall and Kearney know how tight their relationship is. During a recent NRL-360 television programme Marshall spoke glowingly of Kearney's inspirational words on the eve of the triumphant 2008 World Cup final.

Marshall has always been mature beyond his years. Had Johnson not been injured he would have needed to accept third ranking among the touring halfbacks and the possibility of not playing at all in the three Tests. I believe he could have handled that.

We saw both sides of Marshall against the Melbourne Storm at Napier on Saturday. One long pass should have provided wing Jason Nightingale with the opening try – only to be ruled forward by match officials – while another long pass presented the Storm with an interception and a long-range try at the other end of the field.

It is important we take our strongest possible team on tour. The Kiwis lost six consecutive Tests in Britain from 2006 to 2011 and only scraped home in the 2013 World Cup semi-final on the back of Johnson's brilliant last-minute converted try. Now the Kiwis are rated No.1 in the rugby league world they must win this Test series to maintain that status.

Who would you prefer to see alongside Foran in the halves – Melbourne Storm forward Tohu Harris, who bravely played there in the 2014 Anzac Test, Brisbane Broncos apprentice Kodi Nikorima, or a Benji Marshall utterly determined to remake his mark at international level?

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# Week in Northland Sport

By Ben Francis



## Rugby Union

Welsford have won the Bayless Southern Districts final 29-12 Mid Northern. Mid Northern were on the back foot right from the get go as Welsford led 24-0 at the break and didn't look like giving up the lead at any point during the game. Welsford's defence was the big talking point of the game as it dominated during the entire game. Welsford head coach Ross Neal said post game "The boys were focused right at the start of the game, played to our game plan and got a few points up." Now I don't know who came up with this quote but as they say "defence wins championships" and on the day Welsford defence got them home, they played a good portion of the second half with 14 men due to yellow cards but that didn't stop them beating Mid Northern who also had an impressive season.

Despite the loss in the Premier Division Mid Northern did come out on top in the reserves in a come from behind 18-16 win over Otamatea. Otamatea led for the majority of the match before a late try saw Mid Northern claim the lead. Otamatea had the chance to snatch victory late with a penalty but it drifted wide. It appears some encouraging words from Mid Northern Premier coach Craig Edwards at halftime motivated the reserve players to get back up and fight on for the comeback victory.

Southern won the Division two title 36-22 over Pīpiwai. Both teams had hard fought semi final wins over Kaihu and Whangaruru respectively. Southern coach Ron Walters said after the game "pretty good feeling for a young team, it's been a bit of a rough season and that but they have stuck together." Once again Southern's forward pack dominated and that was a big difference in the end. Pīpiwai coach George Paroa was very happy with how his team played and how far they came this season.

Northland first five Daniel Hawkins will be playing Super Rugby in 2016. Hawkins will be joining former All Blacks Adam Thomson, Tamati Ellison and Blues lock Callum Retallick on a one year deal. Five players in this year's Northland squad spent time in Super Rugby Matt Moulds, Jack Ram, Daniel Bowden (Blues) Dan Pryor (Highlanders) and Jone Macalai (Crusaders)

The Northland Rugby team will play a pre-season match against a Northland Development side this Friday 6pm at Mid Western rugby club (Maungakaramēa) then August 7th against Waikato at Siverdale Rugby Club (North Auckland). Also head coach Richie Harris has named Matt Moulds and Dan Pryor to captain the 2015 ITM Cup squad. As said in last week's piece Dan Pryor probably won't be back till mid season due to his elbow injury.

## Rugby League

Defending Scott Electrical Premier champions Otangarei Knights have snuck into the playoffs this season in the final round of competition. Otangarei had to beat Portland and needed results to go their way to sneak in and they did, but only just. Otangarei and Muriwhenua finished the competition with a 9 wins 8 losses record so it came down to points differential with Otangarei sneaking in with a +30 compared to Muriwhenua's +26.

Otangarei beat Portland 24-10 whilst Hokianga beat Muriwhenua 24-22. Minor Premiers Hikurangi beat Moerewa 24-20 who now have lost three of their last five, and Takahiwai secured second place at the expense of Moerewa as they beat Northern Wairoa 42-20.

So Hikurangi and Takahiwai have secured the week off as they are the top two teams. Hokianga will play Portland and Moerewa will play Otangarei in the two minor semi-finals to be played at Toll a Stadium. Kick offs will be at 1pm and 3pm respectively.

Minor Premiers Hikurangi Stags will be favourites to win the title and have been the most dominant team of late, not just this year but in previous years, they have won five of the last eight championships including being in last year's final against Otangarei.

*Continued on next page...*

Continued from previous page...

Great news for the people of the North with Freeview channel35 (Channel North) will be broadcasting the Scott Electrical Final live on their network along with live streaming via Rugby League Northland and NZRL websites. Head along to [www.northernwords.co.nz](http://www.northernwords.co.nz) for more information on the finals series.

Many Junior Northland league players had the opportunity of a lifetime last week with Panthers GM Phil Gould along with talent scout and player manager Darryl Mather in Whangarei taking the junior Northland teams through coaching sessions to try build a relationship between the Panthers and Rugby League Northland. The Panthers currently have first grade players Sam McKendry and Elijah Taylor who hail from the North and the club also has two Northland players running through the U20's system (James Fisher-Harris and Corey Harawira-Naera) Gould saying after the session "The two things today that stood out was the enthusiasm of the players, they have a great passion for the game and secondly how much they improved in the session." Overall Gould was impressed with what he saw and hopefully will be back in the near future.

If you wish to **subscribe** or **unsubscribe** please email Stephen Maier at [stephan.maier@medstar.co.nz](mailto:stephan.maier@medstar.co.nz)

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



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