

VODAFONE



Sir Peter Leitch Club

AT MT SMART STADIUM, HOME OF THE MIGHTY VODAFONE WARRIORS

22nd June 2016

Newsletter #127

Vodafone Warriors Win Against Roosters



Ben Matulino weighing his options



Bodene Thompson pushes through an attempted tackle



Charlie Gubb gets his pass away



Isaac Luke eyes up the opposition



Ken Maumalo fends the Roosters defence



Shaun Johnson on the run



Simon Mannering looks for an opening



Tuimoala Lolohea in action



Tuimoala Lolohea is tackled by Dylan Napa

Aussies Cry Foul

By David Kemeys



QUITE AMUSING to take a look at the Aussie papers for a change in the wake of their much beloved Roosters again failing to get the points, going down 12-10 to our boys at Mt Smart on Sunday.

The Daily Telegraph said it all in just four words – The Chookies blew it.

They must have been watching a different game to me though because they claimed the Warriors did not win it, the Roosters lost it, even claiming you could argue their boys were robbed because Ryan Matterson was pinged for a knock on with only minutes to play, when he did not knock on.

Crikey there was so much whinging it could have been us after pretty much any game, critiquing the ref.

Fair enough, they certainly had their chances, like when halfback Jackson Hastings went inside for Issac Liu on the last tackle. Who knows what he was thinking?

Or when centre Shaun Kenny-Dowall, who showed what a class player he is, broke from the kick off, got to the last defenders and threw the ball into touch.

To which I can only add tough titty you Bondi show ponies. Yes you were without Mitchell Pearce, Boyd Cordner, Aidan Guerra and Blake Ferguson.

Here is how much sympathy I have for you – zero.

“I don’t think we’ve won too many games like that,” Warriors coach Andrew McFadden said. “It wasn’t pretty but we stayed composed and got them where it counts.”

So yes, all in all perhaps a pretty fair summation from the Telegraph’s writer: The Roosters will look at this as one that got away. And not for the first time this season.

Over at The Australian the whining was just as loud, especially about the Ken Maumalo incident.

“As NRL debutant Joseph Manu chased a Jackson Hastings kick into the corner in the 19th minute, Maumalo shouldered him off course. It looked like a penalty try. But instead bunker reviewer Ashley Klein and referee Jared Maxwell sent the Warriors No 5 off for 10 minutes for a professional foul.

“Things were almost as tight in the 72nd minute, with the Warriors, leading 12-10, when Kenny-Dowall made a 40m bust but his pass went behind the player with the Warriors’ line open. That was eight points at least that went begging, but it summed up their season.”

Funnily enough there was no mention anywhere that the Roosters’ game-plan as far as I could tell was to cheat.

The amount of time they spent off-side, lying around in the play the ball and getting hands on the ball went uncommented on.

That they got away with for as long as they did was shocking.

They copped a warning, then the refs did nothing more about it, which made the whole game a frustrating spectacle.

And in my view, and certainly it’s the sort of view a fan has about his own side, even the Maumalo incident was bit of a joke. Quite apart from the Bunker taking forever, nothing happened that does not happen in every game.

But our old friends across the ditch could not resist a parting shot. The Australian writing: For the Warriors, the revival might be short-lived. They face Cronulla on Saturday.

Hoffman Knows Better Is Needed

VODAFONE WARRIORS captain Ryan Hoffman must be a relieved man but at least he is no longer having to defend pitiful performances. He is an honest type and when he was asked if the performance against the Roosters would be good enough to get home against the Sharks, he did not hold back.

“We’ll have to wait and see. We’ll need to improve, but it’s a challenge we’re looking forward to.

“We knew the Roosters would be smarting after last week and we knew the coach would give them a challenge. We know what that’s like and how we’ve responded.”

Sipley Good To Go

Prop Toafofoa Sipley won’t be suspended after his chicken-wing tackle on Roosters forward Kane Evans. Sipley was great in just his second NRL game on Sunday but was cited after wrenching Evans’ arm.

The grade one dangerous contact charge attracts 75 penalty points with an early guilty plea, meaning Sipley will be available for Cronulla.

Take A Bow Nathaniel Roache

It was a bit tough sitting in the stand and listening to people knock Nathaniel Roache for his performance when he was shoved out on to the wing in the wake of the injury to Thomas Leuluai.

Rather than criticise him for not catching a kick and dashing 100 metres to dive over in the corner after beating 12 players, maybe we could have been a bit more circumspect and recognised how good he actually was.

Coming off the bench the young hooker was thrown on to the wing when Tuimoala Lolohea shifted into the halves and David Fusitu’a went to fullback.

His performance was actually pretty bloody good - 10 runs for 71 metres, 10 tackles and some good punch out of our defensive end.

Roache had only ever played on the right wing once before.

“I had my first ever taste against the Broncos in Round 3, I was put out wide and kind of got found out,” he said.”I had some experience playing in the centres, but never the wing, so it was a bit of a shock. I have been doing a bit of work on it and I guess it helped in not doing too badly out there.”

Rnd 15: Sun 19 Jun 2016, 6:00Pm, Mt Smart Stadium

#NRLWarriorsRoosters

New Zealand Warriors - 12
Sydney Roosters - 10

[Highlights](#) [Match Stats](#)
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Fusitu’a Puts In Another Good Shift

When you score four tries in a game your next outing is pretty unlikely to be anything as sensational but David Fusitu’a still ran for 159 metres.

He was solid under the high ball and never gave us long-suffering fans cause to worry.

Captain Josh Hoffman praised the way we adjusted.

“I suppose there was that immediate shock with guys changing positions, but you have got to remember Tui was going to be playing five-eighth for us before Roger Tuivasa-Sheck went down.

He did the job quite well, and our outside backs are quite versatile and can fill positions well. Even though it was a bit of a big change for us I don’t think it affected us too much.”

Where To From Here

Only the most committed optimist expects us to go to Cronulla and set the world on fire, and we all know it is going to be a big step up against a side that has now won 10 on the trot.

Here we go again of course on our annual Origin-period resurgence but don’t forget that in recent times that has been followed by a late season collapse.

Please not again, and certainly not because of an injury to Shaun Johnson, because we all know how critical he is to us. I refer you to Sunday’s try.

Cronulla will tell us if we have turned over a new leaf – or just the old one.

There can’t be much doubt that a hard, gritty performance is the type of build-up we needed going into this one, because if the Roosters tested us, the Sharks will do much more.

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Sure Brisbane were a bit down on troops, Newcastle are poor, and the Roosters are struggling, but that is still three in a row for us, and I much prefer winning three than losing three – something I am much more accustomed to.

That's the first time we have won three in a row in a year and credit where it is due please, especially when we are never shy to give our opinions when we go poorly.

The Sharks are genuine contenders and a good showing this weekend is essential.

I do not know, and I am not suggesting the Sharks are doing anything dodgy, how the hell they fit their lot under the cap.

James Maloney and Chad Townsend, Ben Barba, Valentine Holmes, Jack Bird, Paul Gallen and Andrew Fifita are not being paid butts are they?

Then throw in Luke Lewis, Michael Ennis (my least favourite player in the entire comp), and Wade Graham and it is hard to find a chink in the armour.

Stay in the arm wrestle and we are a shot. Give them the chances the Roosters had and expect to get an old-fashioned arse-kicking.

Johnson Plays Down Injury

Out talisman Shaun Johnson is playing down the thigh strain he is carrying.

It was not enough to stop him scoring a fabulous try that got us home on Sunday but he did hand over the kicking tee to Issac Luke –who looked right at home with it.

Johnson, injured against the Knights and spared training most of last week, says the injury is nothing serious. "I've been through similar things before. I'll manage it and I'll be right."

Warriors coach Andrew McFadden will be sweating on the fitness of Thomas Leuluai so having Johnson right is critical.

Losing Leuluai would be a significant blow.

We can be guilty of going side to side but Leuluai straightens the attack and takes plenty of pressure off Johnson, who summed it all up.

"Tommy leads our team around but I thought all the boys did a terrific job."

Full Credit To Maori TV

It's great to see local league on the tele, so credit to Maori TV for bringing our game to a wide audience. In the feature game Mt Albert were in fine form, beating Pt Chevalier 26-22.

The televised games this weekend are Howick v Mt Albert on Maori TV, Saturday at 3.30pm; and Pt Chevalier v Papakura on Sunday at 3.30pm.

Warriors Pop Up

Manu Vatuvei, Roger Tuivasa-Sheck, Bodene Thompson and Ali Lauitiiti will be on hand to mark the opening of a Vodafone Warriors pop-up store in Papatoetoe this week.

Located in Hunters Plaza beside the food court and Kmart, the store will be open seven days a week for six weeks from Thursday to August 7.

The full range of the club's official 2016 apparel made by Canterbury will be available plus supporters' gear for men, women and kids and an array of accessories. There'll also be opening day specials and giveaways for kids.

The store is due to open its doors at 3pm on June 23 with Vatuvei, Tuivasa-Sheck, Thompson and Lauitiiti in attendance for a signing session from 6pm-7pm.

Vatuvei, Tuivasa-Sheck and Lauitiiti were all brought up on the other side of the motorway in Otara.

Cider With Bite?

England Rugby League has announced Kingstone Press Cider as their principal partner ahead of this year's Four Nations and the World Cup in 2017.

The two-year deal will see Kingstone Press on the national team's playing shirts, and the cider brand now has the Kingstone Press Championship, Kingstone Press League 1, and Kingstone Press National Conference League.

The logo will be on the England shirt when they take on the Kiwis on October 29.



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Four Nations Schedule

October 28: Australia v Scotland in Hull

October 29: England v Kiwis in Huddersfield

November 5: England v Scotland; Kiwis v Australia, both in Coventry

November 11: Kiwis v Scotland in Workington

November 13: England v Australia in London

November 20: Final, Anfield, Liverpool

History Recognised

Last week we told you the first ever game of women's rugby league had taken place in the Middle East. Now even the British Parliament has recognised it. House of Commons members praised all involved in the game between Jounieh Hummingbirds and AUB Women, won 20-6 by for the Hummingbirds.

A motion was passed that recognised the "historic and important step in the development of the sport of rugby league globally".

They Are Going Crazy In Europe For League

European Championship C will kick off in Rivne in the Ukraine this weekend when the hosts face the Czech Republic.

And in Belgrade, a four-try performance by Serbian international Miloš Zogović saw Red Star end Dorćol's 15-year domination of Serbian Rugby League Cup finals, with a 36-20 victory.

Even Turkey are into it, in the shape of club side Kadikoy Bulls, which made its debut in Belgrade. They lost 40-6 but you have to start somewhere.

Meanwhile the first of four planned league festivals has been held in Germany with more than 40 teams, and Poland don't want to be left behind, and have qualified a load of new coaches.

Italy let Europe down though, losing 26-22 to Lebanon in the Med Cup in Sicily.

Who says our game is not growing?

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



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In the Stacey Jones Lounge



Amanda Storey from Christchurch.



Rugby League legend and immortal Andrew Johns.



Betty Hunter Sydney Roosters fan flew over from Sydney to watch the game.



Brodie of Fair Go and Seven Sharp fame with John Palavi looking on.



Charlie Munday from Leads in the UK showing of his Union Jack onesie and Wayne Perkins from Sydney.



Warriors fan Coby Finlayson being talking to Sir Peter.



Luke Dougherty and Campbell Norton.



Derek cutting his cake at the lounge after the game, Derek has recently been unwell and we all wish him a speedy recovery.



Don Graham and Carlos D'Arcy.



Handsome Steve enjoying a laugh with an Adam Worth lookalike.



James Lucas & Dan D'Esposito decked out in their Vodafone Warriors gear.



Jim Young, Claire Jones, Ken Hunter Roosters supporters from Sydney.

In the Stacey Jones Lounge



Wayne Perkins Sydney Roosters supporter with Sir Peter.



John Palavi and Ligi Sao joined us as special guests at half time.



Joseph Parker's Dad Dempsey, Mum Sala and Uncle Tui Freuin.



Sir Peter, Dempsey Parker, and Uncle Tui Freuin.



Dempsey Parker father of Joseph Parker



Ligi Soa presents Sala Parker (mother of Joseph) a gift courtesy of Don Graham with Ligi Sao looking on.



Mark Stafford from the TAB with Dexter.



Robyn Young, Charlie Munday in his Onesy (birthday present), Betty Hunter, Wayne Perkins Roosters supporters from Sydney.



Lorraine and Dave McKee receiving an amazing weekend for two in Sydney kindly donated to Sir Peter Leitch By Mr Peter Thompson of Barfoot and Thompson.



The A team in the Stacey Jones Lounge, Bubs and George.



Leith Innes a well known Jockey gets interviewed by Dexter.



Mark Larsen enjoying a trip from Greymouth in the Stacey Jones Lounge.



By John Deaker

The Warringtons are Nearly as Mad about the Warriors as Sir Peter!

Trevor and Lorna with a replica of the great Provan-Summons trophy

YOU DON'T come across many people as passionate about the 'Mighty Vodafone Warriors' than Sir Peter Leitch but his close friends Trevor and Lorna Warrington give him a good run for his money. Their obsession with anything and everything related to the Warriors is obvious as soon as you step inside the garage out the back of their house in Manurewa. The area has been converted into a Warriors 'fan-cave' that showcases all sorts of memorabilia associated with the club.

Trevor and Lorna are no strangers to people who attend the Mad Butcher's lounge at Mount Smart. Eight years ago they started helping Sir Peter out on every Warriors' game day in the lounge and since then the connection with him has taken their infatuation with all things Warriors to a new level. Having a role on game day is a big commitment for the couple who met playing competitive darts at the Bellbird Hotel in Manurewa more than 35 years ago - and both still hold down full-time jobs. They wouldn't have it any other way though.

"We have to record the game on tv because we're often so busy and miss much of it up in the lounge," says Lorna.

"We get to the ground about three quarters of an hour before lock down each week which is half an hour before the gates open. Then we can set things up like the donation table and seating for that day."

The Warringtons take great pride in unique items like their Warriors' gloves and Warriors' Ugg boots that can't be purchased anymore, as well as their role in turning a garden gnome called M8 into a star that has his own business cards and Facebook page. Over the years M8 has had his photo taken with hundreds of celebrities including PM John Key and league legends Wally Lewis and Andrew Johns.

"If we don't take him to games now we get in trouble," jokes Trevor.

Like much of their memorabilia, M8 was originally sourced from out of Australia after they'd seen an advertisement for him and his 'arch-rivals' from other clubs in a rugby league magazine.

The collecting obsession of the Warringtons can become a bit of a frustration at times when they can't obtain an item. For instance, they've secured the numbers from 1 to 12 of (unopened) Woodstock cans that came out in limited editions. However, as yet they are missing the elusive number 13 captain can ; currently filling the gap on display in their garage is one they've borrowed.

Even a small bottle opener has become the source of some frustration.

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“One thing we’re after is the little clip bottle openers. They used to have them and they go on your key ring. We can’t find them anywhere at the moment though,” says Lorna.

Apart from M8 they both have their own favourite items on display, Trevor’s being a replica statue of the great Provan-Summons trophy given to the winner of the NRL each year, while Lorna’s is considerably smaller: a group of badges from the late 1990’s with the Warriors’ and their opponent’s emblem on them.

While being able to purchase products online has been a positive development for the Warringtons they both agree the changing times have meant that there is less variety of items available than there was in the past. Jim Doyle tells them that this could be related to a limit that each club has on the number of new products they can put out each season. Trevor and Lorna still enjoy checking up at most home games whether a new product may have arrived on the market without them knowing about it – and if it has then, yes, they just have to buy it!

Having witnessed the great dedication Trevor had shown organizing his own memorabilia Sir Peter got him involved when he set up his own sports museum at the Mad Butcher sausage factory in 2011. Trevor also played a key role in the time-consuming tasks involved with sorting and moving all that memorabilia to Mount Smart Stadium where the public can now view this magnificent collection.

It’s obvious that the Warringtons have also put a huge amount of time in to organizing their own museum as it has evolved over the years. The walls take priority but there is also hidden treasures in some of the well-organised folders and bookcases dotted around the ‘fan-cave.’ Trevor’s collection of over 70 Warriors jerseys is based inside the house and surely more items will eventually have to go inside as the Warrington’s collection continues to grow. One thing is certain: this obsession won’t go away. And WHEN (not IF !) the Warriors win the competition the mind boggles at how much fresh content the Warrington’s will have to find priority space for on their garage walls!



Trevor and Lorna with their M8



Cross-stitch of Warriors Logo by the Warrington’s daughter Lisa



The Warriors’ items displayed date back to 1995 - and even before that!



There’s no room in the ‘Fan-cave’ for Trevors collection of over 70 jerseys!



Trophy replicas and painting of M8 done by daughter Trudie



Trevor had the honour of beating the drums at the start of the game.

Another Fairytale Grand Final?

By John Coffey QSM



THE 2015 NRL Grand Final not only provided a fairy tale result but a fairy tale finish when the North Queensland Cowboys levelled up with the Brisbane Broncos in the 80th minute and won through a Jonathan Thurston field goal in golden point time. It was the Cowboys' maiden title in their 21st season, signalling the northern club's true coming of age. They will be rewarded with a new Government-funded stadium in Townsville.

Most New Zealanders would have preferred a triumph for the Warriors, who entered the NRL alongside the Cowboys in 1995. The wait goes on, but our impatience to see a Warriors lap of honour on Grand Final Day is nothing in comparison with that of those who have followed the Cronulla-Sutherland Sharks since their inception in 1967. This is their 50th season. Some original fans who were still at school are now pensioners.

Cronulla has a soft spot in my footy heart. It was at there at the Hotel Cecil that I celebrated my 21st birthday on the last night of the 1967 Kiwis tour of Australia. It was quite a party. The publican told me next day he twice sent for more supplies of Bacardi from the Leagues Club down the road. The Sharks had joined the then Sydney first grade competition – along with Penrith at the foot of the Blue Mountains – earlier that year.

They started promisingly with an 11-5 debut victory over foundation club Eastern Suburbs. By 1973 the people of the Sutherland Shire were flocking to the Sydney Cricket Ground for the club's first Grand Final, only to return home disappointed after a 10-7 loss to Manly. Five years later the Sharks drew 9-9 with Manly in the decider but were hammered 22-0 in the midweek replay. No golden point time in those days.

In 1997 there was hope of a consolation Super League title when an internal war split the clubs into two competitions but the Broncos galloped home 26-8. Cronulla has had to be content with minor premierships in 1988 and 1999 and a midweek Amco Cup win in 1979. They are slim pickings for a club which has for too long lived in the shadows of traditionally powerful neighbour St George Illawarra.

Cronulla was born out of St George's extraordinary sequence of 11 consecutive Grand Final victories from 1956 to 1966. Then known as the Saints and well before its amalgamation with Illawarra, St George was the first club to capitalise on the legalisation of poker machines (and the absence of a salary cap) to build a Leagues Club so grand it was known as the Taj Mahal. They could buy just about every good player in town, and did.

The Sharks' first two seasons were played at Sutherland Oval, before a move to what was then Romulus Stadium. Name changes have abounded, from Endeavour Field (twice) to Ronson Field, Caltex Field, Shark Park, Toyota Park, Toyota Stadium, Sharks Stadium and now Southern Cross Group Stadium as sponsors came and went. It has not officially been Shark Park since 1999 but that is what most people call it.

In 2002 (beaten by the Warriors) and 2008 the Sharks got within one step of the Grand Final. Now they are front-runners again, having won 10 consecutive games (they can equal the club record against the Warriors this weekend). But only two years ago the Sharks were wooden spooners and mired in a supplements scandal. Many wanted the club relocated to the Central Coast, or Wellington, or Perth, or anywhere!

Cronulla's best known Kiwis internationals are Richie Barnett, Tawera Nikau, brothers Dane and Kurt Sorensen and Nigel Vagana. Dane Sorensen set a club record of 216 appearances and is still fifth on the all-time list. Luke Covell, who dislocated a shoulder after four minutes of his only Test in 2007, shares the record for most (10) goals in a match. His career points aggregate has been bettered only by father and son legends Steve and Mat Rogers.

Last year Cronulla reached the semi-finals on the back of a strong defence and a bunch of gnarly forwards led by Paul Gallen, Andrew Fifita, Luke Lewis, Wade Graham, Chris Heighington and hooker Michael Ennis. Now they have slick halfbacks James Maloney and Chad Townsend to link them to brilliant attacking backs Ben Barba, Jack Bird, Gerard Beale, Sosaia Feki and Valentine Holmes.

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A Grand Final triumph would also douse master coach Jack Gibson's famous quote linking the Sharks to former Australian Prime Minister Harold Holt, who mysteriously disappeared from a Victorian beach late in 1967, the year Cronulla came into the big league. Holt has never been seen since. Some conspiracy theorists claimed he had been kidnapped and taken away aboard a Chinese submarine.

According to the late, great Gibson, "waiting for Cronulla to win a premiership is like leaving the porch light on for Harold Holt". If the Warriors cannot do it this year, then I hope Mr Holt finally comes home from Beijing in October to put an end to a half century of suffering by the good rugby league folk of the Sutherland Shire.

New Venues for Kiwis

By John Coffey QSM



THE KIWIS will return to rugby league's birthplace of Huddersfield and play their first Test matches at Perth, Coventry, Workington and, hopefully, Liverpool FC's famous Anfield in October and November. Perth hosts the Trans-Tasman Test on October 15 and the others are part of the Four Nations tournament which also features Australia, England and Scotland.

The Four Nations programme is (with NZ dates):

Saturday, October 29: Australia v Scotland at KC Lightstream Stadium, Hull.

Sunday, October 30: England v New Zealand at John Smith's Stadium, Huddersfield.

Sunday, November 6 (double header): England v Scotland, and New Zealand v Australia at Ricoh Arena, Coventry.

Saturday, November 12: New Zealand v Scotland at Zebra Claims Stadium, Workington.

Monday, November 14: England v Australia at The Stadium, Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park, London.

Monday, November 21: Four Nations final at Anfield, Liverpool.

First on the agenda is the matter of squaring the trans-Tasman series with the Kangaroos at Perth's nib Stadium, after the Australians registered a 16-0 victory at Newcastle in May. The Kiwis were very much weakened by injuries then, and will be well below full strength again with backs Roger Tuivasa-Sheck, Dean Whare, Peta Hiku and Kieran Foran all having suffered season-ending injuries.

Perth has not been a happy venue for the Warriors, who go back there on July 16 to play Manly. Yet, ironically, it was the capacity crowds drawn by the Warriors for their two losses to South Sydney which was one of the reasons for the city to be awarded its first Test match. With a capacity of about 20,500, nib Stadium has staged at least one NRL match every season since 2009.

Then on to Britain and the Four Nations. It was at the George Hotel in Huddersfield that 22 of England's most powerful rugby union clubs held the momentous 1895 meeting which led to the breakaway and formation of the Northern Union, establishing a sport now known as rugby league. Huddersfield played for most of the next century at Fartown, before the current stadium was opened in 1994.

In 1995 the Kiwis and Kangaroos clashed in one of the greatest World Cup matches. A late Kevin Iro try enabled New Zealand to level up at 20-20 in the semi-final to decide who would play England in the final. But Matthew Ridge was astray with the sideline conversion and just missed with a hastily snapped field goal. The mightily relieved Australians went on to score two tries in extra time and, a week later, win the final at Wembley.

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Since then the Kiwis have had mixed fortunes in Huddersfield. They beat Great Britain in 1998 and drew in 2002. But the last three appearances have all resulted in losses, to Great Britain in 2004 and 2005 and England in 2009. No doubt British officials will be hoping that sequence continues at a venue which holds 24,500 fans and is a long way from the big clusters of expat Kiwis down in London.

Choosing the Ricoh Stadium in Coventry, well away from rugby league's heartland, for the double-header was a real surprise, but obviously a decision made after favourable financial negotiations with the local authorities and some unusual inter-code co-operation. It is the home ground of the Wasps rugby union club, which in late 2014 bought the company which runs Ricoh Stadium. The capacity is 33,000.

Coventry – famous for its rebuilt cathedral alongside the ruins of the one bombed during the Second World War, and for Lady Godiva's legendary unclothed horse ride -- is in the Midlands. The city is 153km north-west of London, and (in the language of England fans) 120 miles from Leeds, 108 miles from Wigan and 139 miles from Hull. The Coventry Bears, who play in rugby league's third-tier competition, have played there just once.

Situated on the Derwent River, Workington was once compared to Greymouth by renowned English travel writer Geoffrey Moorhouse. Opened in 1956 as Derwent Park, and with the current sponsor's name having been attached only last year, Zebra Claims Stadium is a modest little field ringed by a motorcycle speedway track. It has a capacity of around 10,000 and a grandstand which seats only 1200.

But Workington will be familiar to many Scottish players, even if it is about 130 miles from both Edinburgh and Glasgow. Scotland beat Tonga and drew with Italy there during the 2013 World Cup and decisively beat Wales in their 2014 European Cup game to qualify for the Four Nations. Maybe the Kiwis should consult Christchurch-based former Kiwi Gerard Stokes, who played for and coached tier-two club Workington Town.

The contrast with Liverpool's massive structure could hardly be greater. Anfield has been the home of Liverpool FC since 1892 and converted to an all-seat stadium in 1994. That reduced the capacity to 44,000 but work began 18 months ago to increase it to 54,000. The Four Nations final will be only the fourth rugby league fixture, but the city made famous by the Beatles is close to rugby league strongholds St Helens, Wigan and Warrington.

Referees By Barry Ross



THE WARRIORS won on Saturday night, so there are no sour grapes if I have a bit of a whinge about the referees. There is no doubt their job is tough and this is more so in current day football with the speed and size of the modern player. But I'll bet there were many others, as well as me, who were sick of Jared Maxwell warning Roosters players without doing anything about it. Several times, particularly in the first half, the Warriors were in try scoring situations but they were restricted from getting quickly to their feet for the play the ball. Maxwell made his feelings clear early to Shaun Kenny-Dowall but no sin-bin eventuated. And that wasn't the only problem. With about 10 minutes to go, both referees and their touch judges missed a shoulder charge by Dillon Napa. This should have been a penalty to the home team, within range of Issac Luke's boot. But instead, a play the ball or two later, the Roosters received a penalty which resulted in them scoring a converted try which brought the scoreline to 12-10. But the mistakes were not finished yet and with four minutes to go and Jake Friend's boys 20 metres or so from the Warriors try line, a blatant forward pass from dummy half was ignored or missed. I know there were some decisions that went the Warriors way. But two major ones in the space of six minutes is a worry. The penalty count of 10-3 definitely favoured the home team, but the Roosters often played on the edge.

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Now that I have that off my chest, let's look at the positives from Saturday. In an interview before the match, coach Andrew McFadden told the Fox commentators that while he knew that his team could score points, he was elated when their defensive efforts lifted. That was the case on Saturday as there were periods where they had to dig deep, particularly in the final 10 minutes. Simon Mannering again led the way with 53 tackles. This is his third best effort in his 12 games this year, right up there with the 55 he made in the first two games of the season against the Wests Tigers and the Broncos. Simon also had his third best running game with 108 metres.

But the damage was done through the middle of the ruck. At dummy half, Issac Luke was outstanding. At his best, and he was close to that on Saturday, he is up there with the best dummy half runners to have ever played the game. He often caught the Roosters out with his ability to run straight and quickly up the middle. Issac's 114 metres were important, as were his three offloads and four goals from four attempts. Nathaniel Roache had quite an assignment on the right wing, marking one of the game's top attacking players, Daniel Tupou. But he was equal to this task and his 84 metres from nine runs, plus 10 tackles was important in the win. A big wrap must also go to 21 year old Ken Maumalo. His 71 minutes resulted in 183 running metres.

On a wet and mild Sydney day, I was happy to watch the Warriors young guns beat the Roosters by 40-20 (7 tries to 4). This was a great effort against a much higher ranked team. Eiden Ackland's name reminded me of the mid to late 1960s when I think, his uncle, Ron Ackland, (18 Tests for the Kiwis) was running around as Goulburn United captain/coach. A member of Ron's Goulburn team was current Manly media man, Peter Peters, who also played in Manly's 1973 Premiership winning Grand Final team against the Sharks. Goulburn is about 80 kilometres north east of Canberra on the highway to Sydney. Congratulations Eiden on your three tries and 23 tackles. What about the 217 metres with nine tackle breaks, 20 year old centre Junior Pauga made in this under 20 game. Only 18 years of age, forward Chris Sio showed he also has a big future. He has a high work-rate and his 162 running metres, along with 22 tackles plus a try, was a good illustration of this. 19 year old fullback Kane Taea is a cool customer and a good goal kicker.

I was happy to see John Sutton return to the Souths line-up against the Eels on Friday night. He now has played 248 first grade games and crossed for 49 tries. In what was only his second match this season, he played 71 minutes.

Good to see the Sharks on top of the ladder at the moment. They deserve to be there after their consistently strong form over the last couple of months. Speaking of the Sharks, will their four State of Origin players, Paul Gallen, James Maloney, Andrew Fifita and Jack Bird, back up to take on the Warriors at Shark Park this Saturday afternoon?

Saturday 2 July is Federal election day in Australia. Many people will be wondering who will make the best Prime Minister, Malcolm or Bill. But this won't be on the Eels fans' minds. They will be wanting to see if their star winger Semi Radradra returns from Fiji, for Parramatta's next match. They have the bye this week and then meet the Sharks at Shark Park on 2 July. Will Semi be there or will he be looking at a career in European rugby union?

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



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High-Tackle Holloway... I'll give ya the tip mate!

The Mad Butchers Weekly NRL Tipping Comp.

By John Holloway

NRL Round 16

NRL Round 16		Sue Phelan	Joe Vagana	John Coffey	Fast Eddie	Monty Betham	Bill Hayward	High-Tackle Holloway
Date/ Venue	Game	<i>Maloney's Barber Shop - The best haircut in town.</i>	<i>League Legend and Machine Lease King.</i>	<i>Newsletter Columnist and Veteran Leagueie</i>	<i>Devonport Dutchman - Takin it easy...</i>	<i>The Warrior Boxer - StepsForLife</i>	<i>Link Business - Buying or Selling a Business</i>	<i>Richmond Bulldog - Old School Richmond Leagueie</i>
22/06 - Pepper	Panthers v Rabbitohs	Panthers	Panthers	Panthers	Rabbitohs	Panthers	Panthers	Panthers
25/06 - Hunter	Knights v Dragons	Dragons	Dragons	Dragons	Dragons	Dragons	Dragons	Dragons
25/06 - Shark Pk	Sharks v Warriors	Warriors	Warriors	Warriors	Warriors	Warriors	Warriors	Warriors
25/06 - ANZ	Bulldogs v Broncos	Bulldogs	Bulldogs	Bulldogs	Broncos	Broncos	Bulldogs	Broncos
26/06 - Cbus	Titans v Raiders	Titans	Titans	Titans	Raiders	Raiders	Titans	Raiders
26/06 - AAMI	Storm v Tigers	Tigers	Storm	Storm	Storm	Storm	Storm	Storm
27/06 - 1300Smiles	Cowboys v Sea Eagles	Cowboys	Cowboys	Cowboys	Cowboys	Cowboys	Cowboys	Cowboys
22/06 - Suncorp	Maroons v BLues	Blues	Blues	Maroons	Blues	Maroons	Maroons	Maroons

How they're traveling....

Picks last week	4/6	2/6	5/6	2/6	5/6	5/6	5/6
Total picks	63/114	64/114	72/114	67/114	71/114	77/114	78/114

INTERESTING RESPONSE to the Tipping comp this week with a couple of punters less than amused about me adding a couple of The International "Rugger" games to bolster the picking options on a short round of games NRL wise. Only 4 club matches plus State of O...so I added a bit of kick'n'clap Chiefs v Wales in Hamilton and Australia v England from Sydney. I have grown up with the "blue collar working man/lower class" view that some Union types attached to our great game in those earlier years and fair to say that slant bolstered the reverse view from our side. Still it was interesting that even in our more open modern society plus the Warriors opening up a wider general and more family oriented audience some still support the stigma. Ex All Black coach Sir Graham Henry is currently in a mentoring role at Mt Smart (co-inciding with our improvement) yet I personally heard him give League a hearty spray at a Langham Fundraiser Dinner a few years back. Fodder for sparking the audience perhaps, on the other hand current All Black coach Steve Hansen no less was a welcome paying spectator (with his wife) at Mt Smart a week or so back and noted that he watched a lot of League as that was the game his son played. Conversely Mike McLennan father of Bluey is an ex Kiwi and noted international coach who holds strong anti-rugby views to the point where he reckons he doesnt drive on Sandringham Road cause that's where Eden Park is. My mate Dale the Rabbitohs tragic gets very dark about "the other code" being included in our quaffing conversations and refuses to acknowledge it at all. I must admit that while many of my rugby bred acquaintances still tip a jaundiced eye at League its often humour based and they know that as a nation we have been reared on "the National game" and while I have played and coached and commented and stood proud for league all my life I still aspired to and played for my college first 15 and have always kept a close eye on Auckland, The Blues and the mighty All Blacks. Its what NZ'ers do. The All Whites, Michael Campbell, The Black Caps, the Breakers, Valerie and Steven Adams, Lydia Ko, Team NZ, Mahi Drysdale, Joseph Parker, Sophie Pascoe et al catch my appreciation as well. In other words live and let live brothers n sisters.

Continued on next page...

Continued from previous page...

Right down to Footy business the hard done by Eels got win number three on Fri nite with McGuire's motley Rabbitohs just not on song. 30/12 to the "Who you gonna call" Cap-busters. The minute the Storm announced the withdrawal injury of Cam the Man Munster they were shot ducks. He was the one X Factor that could inspire the depleted Melbournians and so it proved as the mechanically industrious Dragons got the points 20/10... eventually. Our very own mighty Warriors made it 3 on the bounce in a very tight hard fought battle with the Roosters 12/10 Yeehaaa!! The Homies lost a bit of cohesion with Tommygun off early and we were missing opportunities, Lolohea shifted to his favoured stand-off slot but cant help but think he had more attack space at fullback?? Annywayyyy with Mannerling chopping them down and the Gubbster lifting us up we got the job done. Shark'n'taties next week eh!! The unfancied Titans were my pick for wooden spoon early on but they clearly have shown no respect whatsoever for my opinion shooting down the Sea Eagles 30 to 10 in the Monday niter to cement into the top 8.

Tippin Talk: Wales and England tripped a few as did The Rabbitohs and the Storm and even the State of O with 50/50 punting across those games. Everyone got a point on the Warriors (mandatory) and only The Dutchman backed the Sea Eagles unlucky for him.....Go the Maroons.

NSW Game Recap

By Joe Williams - Vodafone Warriors NSW Team Manager

VODAFONE WARRIORS ISP NSW teams seven-match winning streak has been stopped in the Round 15 clash over the weekend with a 38-6 loss to the Newtown Jets at Henson Park.

Coach Stacey Jones had lost a lot of experience for this encounter with a lot of changes from the previous week. After continuous strong performances from winger Ken Maumalo and Prop Toafofoa Sipley, they were both called in the NRL squad earlier in the week, while John Palavi and Ligi Sao were ruled out with injury and Jonathan Wright and Ata Hingano stayed in Auckland as cover for NRL. This meant a reshuffled side on game day with NYC players Prop Bunty Afoa, Second Rower Ofahiki Ogden and Centre Marata Niukore been called into the team.

The Vodafone Warriors struggled to contest a very good Newtown Jets team handing them too much possession and field position in the first half which lead to 24-6 halftime score with Mason Lino scoring the only points for the team with converting his own try. The frustration continued in the second half with Newtown scoring the only points in the second half finishing the game with a score line of 38-6.

The Vodafone Warriors now have a chance to get back on the winning streak with the next three weeks being home games, starting with this Saturday 25th June against the North Sydney Bears on Mt Smart #2. With the NRL team and NYC team travelling to Sydney this weekend, this gives Vodafone Warriors fans still in Auckland a chance to get out and support their team at home.

Support Stacey Jones' team at Mt Smart here are the details:

Entry: FREE!

Venue: Mt Smart Stadium Field #2

Parking: Through O'Rorke Road

Gates Open: 12:45pm

ISP NSW Kick-off: 1:00pm



An Fantastic Prize for a Deserving Couple

ON SUNDAY 12 June I was at the Mercy Hospice function – “10”, which is a successful fundraiser for the Hospice and a great event. One of the auction items was a trip to Sydney to watch the Vodafone Warriors play the Cronulla Sharks at Shark Park on Saturday 25th June. Peter Thompson, Managing Director of Barfoot & Thompson was the successful bidder of the package and immediately turned to me and said “Butch, give this to a deserving long standing member of the Warriors supporters club”. To be fair there are a few deserving members – so after putting the names in a hat, the lucky winners were David and Lorraine McKee, who fly up from Christchurch for every home game.

At the Warriors game on Sunday 19th June, I had the pleasure of hosting Peter Thompson and his wife Fiona (who incidentally have a corporate table, but chose to join me in the lounge instead!) and Peter presented to David and Lorraine the package, containing flights to Sydney, hotel accommodation for 2 nights, dinner at Jamie Oliver’s Italian Restaurant and of course tickets to the game – which got upgraded by Jim Doyle to two passes to the Chairman’s Club. David and Lorraine were absolutely thrilled; it was a great surprise for a deserving couple.



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Proven leader

With a long history of prolific success, the Warriors CEO is well-equipped to take on one of the biggest challenges in the game.

By **ANDREW MARMONT**

JIM Doyle has always wanted to do better. Whether it was as a semi-professional soccer player, moving across the world or overhauling national sporting organisations, the New Zealand Warriors boss has never been content to leave things as he found them.

Growing up in working-class Scotland in the 1970s was tough. His whole family worked in factories, but Doyle wanted more. He enrolled to be an apprentice electrician, becoming the first person in his family to earn a trade. After finishing, he decided to go to South Africa – a land that offered more opportunity.

Doyle's dedication and desire shone as he worked his way up to production manager at CBI circuit breakers while studying a business degree at night. Results followed, leadership roles did too, but his life changed again when he moved to New Zealand in 1993.

After running a car-stereo company for a few years, he became general manager of a tiny technology company called Navman. Over the course of a decade, he grew it into to a \$500 million business, exiting as a very wealthy man. He then took up an opportunity with the New Zealand Rugby League and transformed them from a "bit of a mess" into a profitable business, after which he joined the NRL as Dave Smith's Chief Operating Officer.

After almost two years as Smith's right-hand man, Doyle was offered the chance to take on the Warriors' managing director role. As a season-ticket holder since 1995, he's as passionate as the thousands of faithful fans who fill Mount Smart every home game.

Following his diverse career, did he ever see himself leading a sporting organisation?

"No. I've been a mad sportsperson all my life; I played lots of sports – including semi-professional soccer – but never thought I'd be involved in sports administration."

It was during his career as a defensive midfielder that he got his first taste of leadership. Telling people where to go and directing them around the paddock came easily to Doyle, a trait which flowed into his off-field endeavours, hence his progression to management roles early in his work life.

He never saw himself as a leader though;

it was simply a by-product of his sporting career. As someone who has plotted the turnaround of both small and large organisations, his take on successful leadership is simple.

"The key is being able to explain to people where you want them to go and how to get there and then aligning everyone with that vision. You need to have very good communication skills and be an excellent listener, too. If everyone feels aligned to this every day, you'll get success."

He referenced the NZRL and NRL roles as key examples. The New Zealand Rugby League was in some trouble when he took the role – "people

"Winning games [is] how we're measured every week ... We can't achieve our wider objectives if we aren't winning games."

were working there, but there wasn't a vision or strategy" – but after doing some research, Doyle came away with a distinctive viewpoint: rugby league is more than just a game; it has the power to make an impact on people's lives and affect positive change. This became the core of his strategic plan to progress the sporting body forward.

Doyle enjoyed the NRL Chief Operating Officer role, where he added value and spearheaded initiatives like the Integrity Unit, and tackled wider issues like ASADA, player behaviour, player welfare and the salary cap, for which Smith praised him greatly. Again, he got his colleagues to buy into a vision.

The Warriors role would surely be his most challenging to date. What does he want to

achieve with the club? Not surprisingly, he wants to create a culture of long-term success.

"Obviously by winning games – because that's how we're measured every week. Our partners and sponsors are also seeing changing standards inside the organisation. But we can't achieve our wider objectives if we aren't winning games," Doyle says.

The goal is to become a top-four side by dramatically overhauling their roster and bringing in players like Roger Tuivasa-Sheck and Issac Luke. It represents a huge change and though it takes time for culture to evolve and cohesion to build, Doyle knows the fans can't wait too long for this to happen.

He's certainly a sharp listener, answering questions in layered detail and always keeping on topic. He practices what he preaches about leadership, but how would he describe his own personality?

"I like to be very innovative and am always looking for continuous improvement. I have high standards for myself and expect other people to meet these standards too."

It's interesting that he mentions innovation, because the NRL and the game of rugby league need to continue to change to maintain their relevance. Despite some minor setbacks during his time at the NRL, Doyle is adamant the game is in great health.

"It's the best shape it's been in [for] many years. With the new broadcast deal and the clubs agreeing to finalise the next funding model, they will be in a better financial position. With our fans, we have growing memberships and they are more engaged through lots of content. Our players are better off financially and have access to great physios, gym facilities and education. Also, we can give back more to our communities, schools and hospitals too."

Warriors fans are used to a rollercoaster existence, with lots of lows, some great highs and heaps of frustration. They need someone at the top who can ensure long-lasting results, not just make quick fixes or big, sweeping statements.

Jim Doyle's spent his whole career wanting to improve things, and he could be just the man to finally take the Warriors from sleeping giant to consistent title contender.

Injury in his youth drove Siliva Havili to learn about his body. Now he is reaping the rewards, one step at a time. By **BEN LONERGAN**

FOOT problems almost ended Siliva Havili's rugby league career before it began. That's why, when the former Warriors and now St George Illawarra Dragons utility was presented the opportunity to study coming through the NRL's under-20s system, there was only ever one choice.

Three years later Havili is a qualified podiatrist after a successful stint at the Auckland University of Technology.

"I had really bad feet when I was younger. Coming out of high school and when I was in the Warriors system, I was cramping up so often that I got referred to the podiatrist in Auckland. I became more interested from there," he says.

"It was compulsory to study in the under-20s and I wanted to do something along the lines of sport, so that's where footwear and orthotics came into my head.

"It was different to what I expected; there was a lot more high-risk and patient orientated stuff than I thought. It wasn't all just the sport side of things, although that was one aspect of it. It was quite challenging, but at the same time it was pretty fun."

The drive to pursue further education was instilled in Havili by his parents from a young age, meaning that even when it became clear a rugby league career beckoned, the stocky dummy-half was still eager to enrol at university.

"My parents are really big drivers of education themselves, my siblings already graduated and I wanted to follow on the leadership pathway they've set," Havili says.

"I just wanted to make my parents proud. Coming from the Pacific Islands they strived for all of us to have good educations."

It's also given him something he's passionate about to fall back on if his football career was to suddenly end.

"It's always handy to have something going on outside football. You can't always depend on football, you only have certain years and you could be struck with early retirement or injury at any time. You have to be ready for that and your life outside footy," Havili says.

Havili looks back on his days as a university student with fondness, but also admits he faced a number of challenges, including trying to find time to complete assessments in between his hectic rugby league schedule.

"Being with the Warriors, you're the only team in New Zealand so you're travelling to Australia every two weeks," he says.

"Players these days can do courses through part-time study, but I couldn't do the course I was doing part-time

because there was a lot of practical work that I needed to do. I finished all the theory work a year ahead and I had to make up all the practical hours the following year."

After his well-documented shock debut for the Kiwis in 2014, Havili appeared destined for stardom in New Zealand – but he would go on to make just 12 scattered appearances for the Warriors across the next two years.

The failure to nail down a regular first-grade spot led to the 23-year-old joining St George Illawarra in the off-season. The decision appears to be paying immediate dividends, with Havili already adding a further nine first-grade caps in 2016 and being regularly called on by Dragons coach Paul McGregor to provide a spark from the bench in the second half of games, either at hooker or in the back row.

"I don't really mind coming off the bench, I'm just happy to be a part of the mix. I'm very fortunate to even be playing NRL. There's a plan behind everything, I'm here for the team and I'm going to do everything I can to help them win," he says.

In pleasing news for Dragons fans, Havili believes we haven't seen anything near their best this season.

"We haven't played our best football or the football we're capable of. A lot of people write us off because of our attack, but I think we've shown we can string together points in the last couple of rounds," he says.

"We've had a well-deserved break with the bye a couple of weeks ago and the boys are really looking forward to the second half of the season."

Walking the path

Former Vodafone Warrior
Siliva Havili



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BIG LEAGUE

THIS WEEK IN BIG LEAGUE'S HUGE ROUND 16 ISSUE...

Jam-packed with FEATURES and NEWS, plus columnist PHIL ROTHFIELD and game analysis by BEN IKIN; plus NRL, HOLDEN CUP, NSW CUP, QLD CUP and RON MASSEY CUP team lists and a FULL NRL DRAW.

FEATURES

- Each year NRL fans are treated to a new crop of talented rookies and 2016 has been no exception. We take a look at the best from each club and shine a light on some of the season's strongest debutants, including **Ashley Taylor** (Titans), **James Fisher-Harris** (Panthers), **Daniel** and **Jacob Saifiti** (Knights), and **Latrell Mitchell** (Roosters).
- A country boy at heart, Dubbo product **Isaah Yeo** feels right at home in Sydney's west. The 21-year-old utility says he loves life at the Penrith Panthers, but remains fiercely proud of his small-town roots.
- Sharks forward **Chris Heighington** has been bracing for big hits for 14 seasons. He talks to *Big League* about effectively preparing his body for battle, and his intention to fend off retirement for as long as possible.
- **Raymond Faitala-Mariner** discusses the passion revival he's experienced since joining the Bulldogs, while club five-eighth Josh Reynolds backs his new team-mate.

Also, former Knights player Mark Hughes explains the importance of good mates as he and Adam McDougall prepare for The Man Challenge; we take a peak at a week in the life of Canberra Raider **Elliott Whitehead**; and Titan **Anthony Don** talks about his off-field pursuits.

PLUS... The Analyst takes a closer look at the **Melbourne Storm's** impressive defensive record and we look back on the Top 8 'one-Origin wonders'.

AND: Little League, lower grade previews and a Matt Moylan poster.



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PANTHERS

NATHAN Cleary wouldn't be playing in the NRL if his dad, Ivan, was still the coach of the Panthers, according to the 18-year-old himself.

Cleary said new coach Anthony Griffin has played him earlier than he thinks his dad would have.

"There'd be too much controversy around my old man playing me, so it was a silver lining to kind of create my own path and go down that way," he said.

The halfback said the last fortnight has been a 'dream come true' after making his debut against the Storm in Round 13 and then starring for the Panthers against the Sea Eagles last Sunday.

"It was unreal. I've been watching NRL since I was about two years old and to actually be out there and get my first win and get it in that fashion was just incredible."

Despite Ivan not being at the club, Nathan said he still goes to his old man for support and advice.

"He's definitely supportive and he tries to tip me up on little things – obviously he's been at the club so he knows how most of the players play, what they like and all that so it was helpful in that way but he's never too pushy or anything, he just kind of lets me do my own thing."

- MB

Remember Ivan Cleary former player and Coach for the Vodafone Warriors?

Well his son, Nathan, is playing NRL for the Panthers. One very proud Dad.

NZRL Surplus - *By Grant Chapman*

New Zealand Rugby League will report a 2015/16 surplus of \$342,000 to next week's annual meeting in Auckland.

The positive result represents a significant turnaround from the \$32,000 loss the previous year. Key contributors were the Kiwis three-test tour of England, TAB receipts, ARLC support for the U18 test series in Australia and cost savings.

The report highlights on-field success for the NZ Kiwis, who won their first Anzac Test in 17 years and captured the world #1 ranking, and Kiwi Ferns, who defeated the Australian Jillaroos in a second consecutive NRL Auckland Nines series.

"This year's financial surplus is very pleasing," confirms NZRL chairman Garry Fissenden.

"There is still work to be done regarding the potential funding shortfall in the 2017 World Cup year, but we have plans in train for this."

The New Zealand Rugby League AGM is scheduled for 10am, Monday, June 27 at its Penrose headquarters, 7 Beasley Ave.

Download a copy of the 2015/16 NZRL Annual Report [here](#).



Class of 2002 Players Share Memories

By Richard Becht



THE VODAFONE Warriors turned the clock back when they faced the Sydney Roosters last Sunday by recognising the club's history with a replica of the hugely popular strip they wore in the club's landmark 2002 season.

That year the Vodafone Warriors finished the regular season as minor premiers for the first and only time so far before beating Canberra and Cronulla to advance to their first grand final against the Roosters.

The Vodafone Warriors and the Roosters have just met for the 37th time since their first clash at Ericsson Stadium – as it was known then – in 1995.

To mark the occasion www.warriors.kiwi made contact with the players who appeared for the NRL side in 2002 asking them for their favourite memories and highlights.

Here are their comments (Vodafone Warriors number in brackets):

STACEY JONES (#24)

Playing our first final at home against the Raiders is my favourite memory not only of the 2002 season but of my time with the club as a player. I loved everything about that day, the atmosphere the fans generated, the football we played and the result. Walking around the game afterwards was inspirational. It was so good to see so many happy people in the crowd. They'd been through a lot with us over the years and you could see the satisfaction they felt.

The previous week we'd won the minor premiership and that day, after beating the Raiders, we were presented with the shield out on the field. Everyone was there and then a few weeks later we were in the grand final.



AWEN GUTTENBEIL (#33)

I remember eight or so of our starting side were rested for the final game of the regular season against Wests Tigers and we won – not knowing other results would fall our way and we'd become minor premiers by the end of the weekend.

We then had our first-ever home final against the Raiders the following week. The pride we as players had running out in front of our families, friends and fans was matched by everyone supporting the club that day. It was a truly magic moment in the club's history.



LOGAN SWANN (#42)

The most enjoyable year of my playing career was unquestionably the 2002 season. We had a dynamic group of individuals who created the best and most competitive environment we'd ever experienced at the club. That was certainly how I felt about it. What we were able to achieve by making the grand final for the first time was one of the club's proudest moments and there were so many other memories as well that made the season the most enjoyable I ever had.



Continued on next page..

JERRY SEUSEU (#50)

I remember the people and enjoyed the friendships. The club brought together such an eclectic group and we had unprecedented success. When else would you get the likes of Tooks, Toops, Fa'afili, Motu, Logan, Stace, PJ, Franny, Villa, John Carlaw and Ivan in a group?

We had a long winning streak (eight matches) which justified the brand of footy we were playing. It was fun to play and be part of and the crowds really got into it. Our fans were vocal and really rallied behind us. I remember the people.



ALI LAUITIITI (#55)

For me there are two favourite moments. The first was the club winning the minor premiership for the first time. We beat Wests Tigers in the last match of the regular season on a Friday night and then results went our way in the final match to give us the title ahead of Newcastle. The next for me was beating Cronulla to make our first ever grand final and seeing how happy the boys were.



MONTY BETHAM (#61)

After making the top eight for the first time in the club's history in 2001, we had a good feeling about 2002. We had a great mix of youth, x factor and experienced heads sprinkled through the squad with plenty of physicality on top. The best memory was Stacey's solo try in the grand final – one of the best ever!



WAIRANGI KOOPU (#64)

My favourite memory ... standing behind Stace as he dribbled a kick in behind the Sharks' defensive line, watching it run end over end almost in slow motion and then a flying John Carlaw snatching it out of mid-air and scoring near the posts to put us through to the grand final.



FRANCIS MELI (#65)

Too many good memories! One that stands out is being part of history in the club. In 2001 we made the top eight for the first time ever; even so we lost our first play off.

In 2002 I was part of the first time the club finished table leaders. In that year we were so young but believed in ourselves. We had the feeling that losing a game didn't cross our minds regardless of whether we were down. As a team everybody played their part and had faith in each other. That was our backbone – knowing that no one would do anything to let someone else down.



To beat the Sharks in the semi was like a dream come true or more like: “Is this really happening? We’re playing in the grand final!”

Running out on the field for the grand final is something I will never forget, not about the fact we lost but how our journey got us there. We changed our mind-set as young men from what we learnt from 2001.

The jersey came about through (coach) Daniel Anderson and the management. They changed it to black because teams feared the All Blacks and were dominated by them. We made that jersey our own that year.

CLINTON TOOPI (#86)

For me personally 2002 was the pinnacle of my career. That particular year had so many life-changing experiences, memorable moments and monumental achievements that are etched in the club’s and New Zealand rugby league’s history but also my playing career.

I have so many significant memories that have a special place in my heart, from the first time we beat the Broncos on their own soil to the Raiders at home when everyone came from far and wide to celebrate and witness our first-ever home semi-final and win. That was a game where we were able to give our loyal supporters and the rugby league community a big thank you for their unwavering support.



IVAN CLEARY (#73)

Playing at Mount Smart in some big games in 2002 where there were huge crowds going crazy are my fondest memories. Wins against heavyweights the Bulldogs and the Broncos plus the home semi against the Raiders are memories that can never be erased. I love that stadium and the Warriors crowd are a special bunch.



SHONTAYNE HAPE (#80)

There was great bunch of guys at the club that season. To this day I keep in touch with lots of them. There was just such a buzz around the club and the whole country as we went through to not only win the minor premiership but to then go all the way to the grand final. Daniel Anderson to this day rates as one of the best coaches I had in my career.



Continued on next page..

MARK TOOKEY (#76)

My favourite memory was when we beat Cronulla in the final to go into the grand final. Eric Watson paid for tickets for Kiwis living in Australia and it felt like a home game. They were doing the haka in the grandstands everywhere and when we arrived back in New Zealand there were thousands of our supporters waiting at the airport.

That year I also remember on about six or seven occasions standing next to Kevin Champion after a game watching him get another 20 odd stitches in his face or head. I think it became so regular that Mick Watson, our CEO at the time, asked if he could do a few stitches for him.

What a great year!

HENRY FA'AFILI (#81)

There are a few good memories from that year so where to start?

The week of the grand final was unreal, just the everyday banter from the boys and Ando. Another was being part of the first team to play at Westpac Stadium in Wellington and to be one of the three players to score a try in our famous comeback against the Bulldogs that ended up with a draw.

Kempy's video sessions were always a laugh at the end of them when he'd be mocking a particular player.

Basically the best memory for me is rewarding the crowd by scoring tries and adding a bit of flavour with the try celebration at the end of them!

KEVIN CAMPION (#86)

Obviously making the grand final was my highlight that year and Stacey's try was just unbelievable. There were plenty of other highlights as well. One of them was Mick Watson stitching my head one day!

RICHARD VILLASANTI (#87)

Other boys have said it and I completely agree with them about season 2002. That was without question one of the best years of my life.

The grand final week in particular was a time I look back on with fond memories. The whole of New Zealand was behind us! The well wishes and the messages all over our hotel rooms were so humbling.

Most of all the laughs and good times we had with each other always bring a smile to my face. Such a talented team '02.



JUSTIN MORGAN (#88)

One moment that always stands out is the welcome home at the airport after beating Cronulla to make the grand final. The place was packed, I remember a haka being done and the fans going off. There was also the welcome after the grand final when we went back to Mount Smart.

Most of all I just remember everyone getting on so well. We had a diverse group of players, basically just thrown together with a lot of pick-up players like me being given a chance but we got on so well on and off the field.



MOTU TONY (#90)

The semi against the Sharks will always be a favourite memory for me. Some of us were young players then. I'd come into the NRL only the previous season but seeing how emotional the older boys were after winning that day made us realise just how much it meant to them and how special it was what we'd just achieved. "Gee, we've just got to the big dance! What about that?" The whole season was unbelievable but that was the special moment for me.



JUSTIN MURPHY (#92)

Season 2002 and the memories we made will stick with me forever. It was great to be on the field playing with this group, many of who were at the top of their game. I am grateful to have been a part of it.

It still hurts thinking about the grand final but to make it was pretty special. I always look forward to catching up with the guys. The friendships made are something I always cherish.

To have the support of not only the Warriors faithful but Auckland and the whole of New Zealand right behind us also lifted us. These days I love supporting the team and going to games whenever I can. I can't wait to watch the first Warriors team bring home the trophy!



P J MARSH (#96)

The whole 2002 season is still so clear in mind. It was such a fantastic time; I really remember it like it was yesterday. There's no doubt about my favourite moment – Stacey's try in the grand final. It was an unbelievable try and it always comes up in grand final highlights. Then there was the semi against the Sharks. There were some great moments in that match, too, but the whole year was like that and it's an experience I'll always treasure.

I've still got the playing shorts from that season and I've been wearing them around a lot lately. My father had then on a few weeks ago and I asked him where he got them from. He said: "Where do you think? From you. You gave them to me." I got them back off him! That was a great kit. The whole club is great. I just loved my time with the Warriors and I still love the club so much today.



BRENT WEBB (#97)

The most vivid memory for me is definitely my NRL debut against Newcastle at home, coming off the bench and scoring a try although we lost the game. The other favourite highlight was our (26-16) win over the Broncos at ANZ Stadium, the first time we'd beaten them in Brisbane. That was huge. I was on the bench again and scored a couple that day. While I didn't play in the finals I just have so many great memories of that season.



LANCE HOHAIA (#99)

The memories that stand out for the 2002 season for me are probably the beginning and the end of that year. I made my debut in round four and that will always be a fond memory. We beat the Cowboys fairly convincingly and I scored a try. I still remember that feeling of running in to score to this day and to then go on to play in the grand final that same year was just awesome. Stacey's try was a highlight and, even though we lost the game, I was happy about all we accomplished that year.



VINCENT ANDERSON (#100)

One of my favourite memories is John Carlaw scoring the try that put us through to the grand final. It was such a big moment for the club and we were all ecstatic.

Another favourite is Kevin Champion touching up Shane Webcke when we played the Broncos at Mount Smart Stadium. Everyone knew we were a skilful team but I think that moment really showed the competition that we were also tough and wouldn't stand for any crap. We were about to head into the play-offs, so the timing was perfect.



**The 2002
Vodafone
Warriors Team.**

*All photos credit of
www.photosport.nz*

ARL Rd 10 Review & Rd 11 Preview

IN THE first Maori TV feature game of the year Mt Albert were in fine form beating rivals' Pt Chevalier 26-22 to avenge their 14 all draw to the Pirates earlier this year.

The Lions now sit tied on points with the Pirates, only trailing behind on differential.

Earlier at Fowlds Park, the Papakura Sea Eagles crushed the Mangere East Hawks 58-8.

Richie Blackmore's Papakura side remain unbeaten and will be focused when they play premierships favourites Pt Chevalier and Mt Albert in coming weeks – the Sea Eagles genuine rivals for both sides.

Marist who sit on the edge of the top 3 in the Fox got over Richmond 34-22 while Glenora who sit fourth on the ladder beat Northcote 40-14.

Otahuhu remain in danger of dropping down to the Sharman Cup following another loss, going down 56-24 to the Howick Hornets.

Meanwhile down in the Crown Lift Trucks Sharman Cup, Te Atatu remain at the top of the table winning 34-18 over Bay Roskill who are currently sitting third on the ladder and Ellerslie who sit second crushed Glenfield 44-8.

Papakura will play Pt Chevalier in this week's ARL Game of the Round at Fowlds Park with Howick to play Mt Albert at 11am - Both games will play on Maori Television this weekend.

Otahuhu find themselves dead last with a huge job ahead when they play Richmond at Grey Lynn Park to avoid relegation.

Out south, Mangere East who come off the back of four losses will be chasing a win when they host Northcote at Walter Massey Park while Marist travel to Harold Moody to play Glenora.

SAS Fox Memorial Premiership Rd 10

Papakura 58 Mangere East 8

Otahuhu 24 Howick 56

Northcote 14 Glenora 40

Mt Albert 26 Pt Chevalier 22

Marist 34 Richmond 22

SAS Fox Memorial Rd #11 Fixtures

Richmond v Otahuhu @ Grey Lynn Park 2.30pm

Glenora v Marist @ Harold Moody 2.30pm

Mangere East v Northcote @ Walter Massey Park
2.30pm

Pt Chevalier v Papakura @ Walker Park 2.30pm

Howick v Mt Albert @ Walker Park 11am

Crown Lift Trucks Sharman Cup Rd 10

East Coast Bays 4 Waitemata 34

Te Atatu 34 Bay Roskill 18

New Lynn 16 Manukau 14

Glenfield 8 Ellerslie 44

Mt Wellington 0 Papatoetoe 56

Pakuranga 26 Hibiscus Coast 18

Ponsonby 42 Otara 38

Manurewa BYE

Crown Lift Trucks Sharman Cup Rd #11 Fixtures

Glenfield v Otara @ Sunnynook Park 2.30pm

Ellerslie v Te Atatu @ Ellerslie Domain 2.30pm

Hibiscus Coast v Ponsonby @ Stanmore Bay 2.30pm

Bay Roskill v New Lynn Blockhouse Bay 2.30pm

Mt Wellington v Pakuranga @ Thompson Park 2.30pm

East Coast Bays v Manukau @ Freyberg Park 2.30pm

Papatoetoe v Manurewa @ Kohuora Park 2.30pm

Waitemata BYE



ARL Games Televised Live Nationwide on Maori TV

Howick v Mt Albert to air on Maori TV Saturday June 25, 3.30pm

Pt Chevalier v Papakura to air on Maori TV Sunday June 26, 3.30pm





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Vodafone
Power to you



Reader Mail



VODAFONE WARRIORS player Albert Vete and partner Whitney had a baby girl last week Ariella Mel Vete we wish them much happiness with their little princess.



THIS IS our newest Vodafone Warriors fan, Arlo Nordqvist-Wright. Arlo is the son of Graham Wright's, Head of Brand Engagement and Sponsorship Communications at Vodafone, and Susie Nordqvist-Wright, Newshub reporter and presenter



THE LATEST snap of Leila supporting the Vodafone Warriors against the Roosters with her Mad Butcher doll. Thanks again Sir Peter, you're too kind!

Glenn for the Vodafone Warriors



VODAFONE WARRIORS fame has spread to Bristol in England, where Hugo and Olive are now committed to the cause.

They are the niece and nephew of current Vodafone Warriors board member Niki Schuck.



We wish the All Blacks all the best for their test match in Dunedin on Saturday night against Wales.
Go the All Blacks!!





Extended Bench Named for Cronulla Trip

by Richard Becht

QUEENSLAND ORIGIN prop Jacob Lillyman has been named as the only line-up change for the Vodafone Warriors' 16th-round NRL clash against the top-of-the-table Cronulla Sharks at Southern Cross Group Stadium in Sydney on Saturday (5.30pm kick-off local time; 7.30pm NZT).

The 32-year-old 220-game NRL veteran makes his 12th Origin appearance in the second match of the 2016 series against New South Wales at Suncorp Stadium tomorrow night.

He has today been named to start in the Vodafone Warriors' much-anticipated encounter with the Sharks three days later.

Lillyman's inclusion in the line-up sees fellow senior prop Ben Matulino named on the bench with Albert Vete the other starting front rower, as he has been in the three consecutive wins over Brisbane, Newcastle and the Sydney Roosters in the last three rounds.

The 23-year-old led the Vodafone Warriors' forwards with an impressive 138 metres from 14 runs in his 33 minutes on the field against the Roosters.

VODAFONE WARRIORS

- 1 Tuimoala Lolohea
- 2 David Fusitu'a
- 3 Blake Ayshford
- 4 Solomone Kata
- 5 Ken Maumalo
- 6 Thomas Leuluai
- 7 Shaun Johnson
- 8 Jacob Lillyman
- 9 Issac Luke
- 10 Albert Vete
- 11 Bodene Thompson
- 12 Ryan Hoffman (c)
- 13 Simon Mannering

Interchange

- 14 Nathaniel Roache
- 15 Sam Lisone
- 16 Ben Matulino
- 17 Charlie Gubb
- 18 Ata Hingano
- 20 Toafofoa Sipleby

VODAFONE WARRIORS v CRONULLA SHARKS

Southern Cross Group Stadium, Cronulla

5.30pm, Saturday, June 25

Referee: Grant Atkins

Assist Referee: Matt Noyen

Touch Judges: Jason Walsh & Ziggy Przeklasa-Adamski

Standby: Chris Treneman

Review Officials: Matt Cecchin & Bryan Norrie

Senior Ro: Luke Patten



In Australia for the State of Origin



Me & Janice did a bus tour around Brisbane.



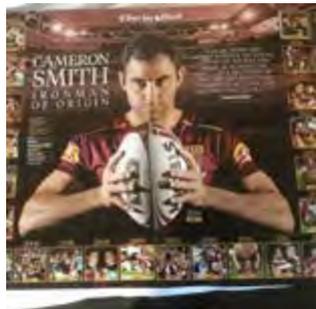
Me and Janice are in Brisbane for the state of origin.



Stuart cook chief concierge at the Pullman hotel in Brisbane top man.



Origin Program Cover.



Great poster in the Courier Mail on Tuesday.



Guess who I'm going for in the Sate of Origin?

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

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