

Tēnā tātou katoa



Tēnā koutou katoa.

I trust you enjoyed the first issue of the New Zealand Māori Rugby newsletter that was circulated in October 2006. As mentioned in that newsletter, I hope you find this a useful way of being kept up to date with New Zealand Māori rugby and the New Zealand Māori Rugby Board activities, and I welcome any suggestions, feedback and items for inclusion that you may have.

This issue updates you on the recognised achievements within Māori rugby at the recent New Zealand Rugby Union (NZRU) Steinlager Rugby Awards and the National Māori Sports Awards, profiles the rise of young rugby players Tim Bateman and Aaron Bancroft, and National Māori Liaison Officer Tiki Edwards updates us on the activities he has been organising.

Also included in this issue are details of the upcoming regional tournaments along with the dates for the regional teams' round-robin competition which we are reintroducing this year. This involves the regional tournament selection teams for men, Under 21 men and women. The winners will receive the George Nepia Memorial Shield (region gaining the most wins across their three teams), the Prince of Wales Cup (winners of the men's round-robin) and the Manny MacDonald Challenge Cup (winners of the Under 21 men's competition).

In the last few months I, along with regional Chairmen, have attended various Provincial Union Board meetings to discuss matters of mutual interest to help enhance the relationship between New Zealand Māori rugby and the Provincial Unions. These meetings also provided us with an opportunity to update them on the progress we have made with the New Zealand Māori Rugby Strategic Plan. We have been well received by the Provincial Unions and will continue this initiative.

The New Zealand Māori Rugby Board AGM will be held in Wellington in April and I encourage you to attend.

For more information on the AGM please contact Andrea Healy, on andrea.healy@nzrugby.co.nz or 04 494 7051.

Paul Quinn
Chairman, New Zealand Māori Rugby Board



As New Zealand Māori coach I am excited about the upcoming season. We will once again be participating in the Churchill Cup tournament, which will this year be staged in England from 19 May to 2 June.

The change of venue (from the United States and Canada where it was held in previous years) will pose new challenges for us.

Playing in English conditions will be different from what we experienced in Canada in 2004 and 2006 – the grounds were hard in Canada and that suited our style of play. However, although we expect the venues in England to have relatively soft surfaces, we won't look to change the way we play. Our game has always been based on mobility and an attacking game plan in which we use the players' natural flair and skill and that won't change.

Obviously the upcoming Rebel Sport Super 14 is an opportunity for Māori players to play themselves into consideration for selection. So too the various Māori regional tournaments that will be played over the next couple of months.

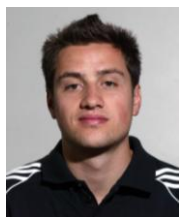
Last year I was encouraged by the number of Māori players who came through the Air New Zealand Cup. Admittedly we have lost some senior players to overseas clubs but there's a new breed of players coming through and that is exciting for Māori rugby.

As for the Churchill Cup tournament we will have to adapt quickly to conditions if we want to win the title again. We will also be conscious of the need to ensure that our forwards are able to supply the backs with quality possession to play the type of game that we are renowned for – so we will need players who can dominate up front and give us that front-foot ball.

I would like to take this opportunity to publicly thank Jamie Joseph and Stu Forster for their contribution to our team's success in 2006. As assistant coaches last year, they played a key role in our Churchill Cup win. On behalf of the players and management, we wish them all the best for the future.

Donny Stevenson
Coach, New Zealand Māori

Young players on the rise



Tim Bateman



Aaron Bancroft

The Rebel Sport Super 14 is one of world rugby's top competitions and continues to offer so many players the opportunity to excel at an international level.

2007 will be no different with 42 new players due to make their debut in the southern hemisphere competition, also involving teams from Australia and South Africa.

Among those new faces are two young Māori players, 19-year-old Crusaders midfielder Tim Bateman and 22-year-old Highlanders midfielder Aaron Bancroft.

Bateman steps into a Crusaders side that has set the benchmark in the Rebel Sport Super 14 competition over the years. Since the competition was launched in 1996, the Crusaders have made eight finals, winning six.

"Being young I'll be drawing experience from the different ways they do things, both on and off the field," he said when asked about a team whose work ethic mirrors its results.

Bateman's ability was recognised early. He is a former New Zealand Schools representative and in 2006 excelled for the New Zealand Under 19 team at the World Championship in Dubai.

Described as a talented young midfield back, Bateman continues the proud rugby production line of his alma mater, Christchurch Boys' High, the school that All Blacks Aaron Mauger, Daniel Carter and Andrew Mehrtens also attended.

Learning is the theme for the 19-year-old because not only is he on the verge of his first year in professional rugby, he will also be taking on his second year of law at Canterbury University. Then there's his desire to learn Te Reo in the future. Education runs in the family with both of his parents being teachers and also fluent in Te Reo. "I can speak a little, but I would love to be able to speak Māori."

So too Bancroft.

"I used to go to Kōhanga Reo when I was younger. I was fluent then, but have forgotten most of the language and would love to learn it again," Bancroft said.

Like Bateman, he has experienced a national team environment before, having played for the New Zealand Heartland XV and in 2006 the New Zealand Under 21 side.

And the 22-year-old centre is excited about the challenge of being a fulltime player. "I'm looking forward to getting into the best state, physically and mentally and I think my previous experience in a national team will help me."

Regional tournaments

George Nepia Memorial Shield

The George Nepia Memorial Shield was presented by the Hawke's Bay Rugby Union in 1987. It was contested as an inter-zonal series between 1987 and 1989. In 2007 the Shield will be awarded to the Māori Region with the most overall points following the men's, women's and Under 21 men's competitions.



Prince of Wales Cup

The Prince of Wales presented this trophy in 1928 for competition among Māori regions. It was contested between four Māori districts: Te Waipounamu, Tai Hauauru, Tai Rawhiti and Tai Tokerau.

In 2007 the trophy will be contested between the regional men's teams of Te Waipounamu, Te Tini a Maui and Te Hiku o Te Ika.

Manny MacDonald Challenge Cup

This Cup was donated in 1980 by the family of the late Manny MacDonald and was first contested by the Central Districts and the South Island Under 23 sides. The Cup will be awarded to the top team at this year's Under 21 regional men's competition.



How to contact your local Chairman

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National Māori Liaison Officer



Nga mihi kia koutou katoa.

Greetings to you all.

In our last newsletter, I gave a brief description of my role as Māori Liaison Officer, and some of the initiatives which were implemented around the country during 2006. In this issue, we look at a number of the initiatives carried out at the end of 2006 and preview some of the events coming up in the first half of 2007.

Māori Whānau & Cultural days

The Auckland Rugby Football Union, in conjunction with their Māori Board, held a Seven-a-side Māori rugby day at the Waitemata RFC in October 2006 with eight men's, five women's and 12 school teams participating.



Food and fun playing Māori sevens rugby

Māori Coaches, Referees, Administrators and Managers (CRAMS) seminar

The Hawke's Bay Rugby Football Union held a one-day upskilling course for Māori in October last year and a total of 38 coaches, referees, administrators and managers attended. The day comprised several individual sessions, led by New Zealand Māori coach Donny Stevenson, New Zealand Māori manager Peter Potaka and other rugby administrators, including NZRU Provincial Union Support Manager Dane Dougan.

E Tū Taitama and Rangatahi Māori role model programmes

These programmes were held in Hamilton and Dunedin and were first introduced in April 2006, with the aim to provide life skills and support for Māori youth. High profile Māori rugby personalities were involved in these programmes, including New Zealand Māori coach Donny Stevenson, former New Zealand Māori coach Matt Te Pou, 2006 New Zealand Māori captain and Waikato stalwart Jono Gibbes, his provincial team mate Scott Linklater and ex-New Zealand Māori and All Black Phil Coffin. We look forward to the young men, who participated in the programmes, leading and making positive contributions to their communities in the future.



Participants on E Tū Taitama (Hamilton) and E Tū Rangatahi (Dunedin) programmes

Rangatira Māori rugby workshop

The NZRU facilitated a development workshop for 20 nominated Māori coaches from around the country at the end of November 2006.

The three-day workshop focused on the latest coaching and sports psychology methods within a Māori context and provided an opportunity for these coaches to network and build strong relations with other quality Māori coaches. The highlight of the course was Dr Farah Palmer presenting on Leadership and her World Cup experiences.



Participants of the Rangatira workshop held in Palmerston North.

Whakatauākī:

Māori Proverb

Ka whakaki ki te Maunga

Ka tai ki te Whenua

Ka hoki ki te Rangī

Ka tai ki te Pukerunga

"If you aim for the mountains you will hit the plains"

"If you aim for the sky you will hit the mountain peaks"

"Set challenging goals"

Tēnā tātou katoa

Tiki Edwards

For enquires and further information email
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New Zealand Māori Rugby



New Zealand Māori in 2007

New Zealand Māori will once again participate in the Churchill Cup tournament, which will this year be held in England. Last year New Zealand Māori won the tournament, the second time in three years after last winning the title in 2004. The Churchill Cup tournament, now in its fifth year, was previously hosted by the United States and Canada. The New Zealand Māori are due to play matches against Canada on Friday 25 May and Ireland on Tuesday 29 May. The Churchill Cup final is scheduled for Twickenham in London on Saturday 2 June. Kick off times and locations will be confirmed in due course.

And the award goes to...

Four Māori rugby players scooped top awards at the annual Steinlager Rugby Awards in December 2006 and the National Māori Sports Awards.

Carl Hayman

All Blacks, Highlanders and Otago prop Carl Hayman was named the Tom French Memorial Māori Player of the Year. Rated the best player in the world in his position, Hayman had a relatively high-profile 2006 by his standards; after scoring just two tries in a first-class career stretching back to 1998, he turned into a try-scoring machine, dotting twice against the Brumbies in the Rebel Sport Super 14 then scoring his first Test try, against England at Twickenham in November, in his 32nd Test. Hayman was also Māori Player of the Year in 2004.

Amiria Marsh

Black Ferns and Canterbury midfielder Amiria Marsh was named Women's Player of the Year. Marsh is one of the game's leading players and was a standout performer for the Black Ferns at the 2006 Women's Rugby World Cup in Canada. The 2006 tournament was the second for the 23-year-old Cantabrian. She is known for her strong running and outstanding defence and displayed her full array of attacking skills at the World Cup, scoring six tries, the most by any New Zealand player.

Richard Kahui

Waikato's standout centre Richard Kahui was named Air New Zealand Cup Player of the Year. With speed and an eye for the gap, Kahui was a confident, stand-out performer for Waikato in the Air New Zealand Cup, topping the try scoring list with eight tries, including a double in the crucial early win over Canterbury, a hat-trick against Northland and one in the final against Wellington. Kahui's Air New Zealand Cup followed brilliant performances in 2006 for New Zealand Māori and New Zealand Under 21s.

Farah Palmer

Former Black Ferns captain Farah Palmer received the supreme award at the 2006 National Māori Sports Awards when she was named the Albie Pryor Memorial Māori Sportsperson of the Year in Auckland in November 2006. In addition, Palmer also won the Senior Māori Sportswoman award. The 33-year-old hooker retired from all rugby in September last year, ending her stellar decade-long international career with the Black Ferns winning the IRB Women's Rugby World Cup in Edmonton last September.

Upcoming events in 2007

Regional Māori rugby tournaments

23–24 February

Te Waipounamu, Alpine Energy Stadium, Timaru

2-3 March

Te Tini a Maui, Palmerston North Arena

3-4 March

Te Hiku O Te Ika, Waitemata RFC, Auckland

George Nepia Memorial Shield, Prince of Wales Cup and Manny MacDonald Challenge Cup Regional Games

10 March

Te Tini a Maui v Te Hiku O Te Ika, Palmerston North

17 March

Te Waipounamu v Te Tini A Maui, Christchurch

23 March

Te Hiku o Te Ika v Te Waipounamu, Auckland