



Upcoming CRL Calendar

CRL Junior Council Meeting

When: - Friday 6th November 2009

Where: - Holiday Inn Potts Point

Time: - Commencing at 4PM

CRL Junior AGM

When: - Saturday 7th November 2009

Where: - Level 2, NSW Leagues Club

Time: - Commencing at 10AM

CRL AGM

When: - Friday 27th November 2009

Where: - Foster's Headquarters, Rhodes

Time: - Commencing at 10AM
Bus to depart from Holiday Inn at 9AM sharp

CRL Office Christmas Hours

The CRL office will close on morning of the 17th

December and will re-open January 11th 2010. Emails will be accessed intermittently throughout



Upcoming High Performance Coaching Update

When: - Saturday 5th December 2009

Where: - Apex Oval, Dubbo

Time: - 8.30am—4.00pm

Cost: - \$50 which includes lunch

For more information please contact Luke Ellis on (02) 9237 0743 or

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MY TIME IN THE NRL ESL VRL AND A LITTLE BUSH CLUB

By Ben Roarty

Looking back over the years at the Good, Bad and Ugly times of my career I have really come to appreciate wise words, that former Rooster, Dragon and Panther Colin Ward once told me - "You are retired a long time, mate". Well, finally after playing a few games over the last few years in the Australian domestic scene and fully retiring from professional Rugby League in 2006, it's all about to come to and end. I'm sitting on the team bus on a two hour drive from Hay to Griffith, NSW to play in the Group 20 (Riverina , Southern NSW) Reserve Grade Grand Final.

The four hour drive every second or third week up from Melbourne to play for Hay Magpies is a real reminder to me just what the game of Rugby League is about - playing for the love of the game !!!

That's what its all about!! It's only a game, that we players are lucky enough to be a small part of.

Thanks Rugby League - and to the pioneers of the game who started the code Huddersfield, England in 1895.

The game of Rugby League came about at a meeting at the George Hotel and I had many beers and good times there, during in my time in Huddersfield when I was playing with the Giants. I have had a close relationship with the Hay Magpies since coming here on a hunting trip with four or five Melbourne Storm players in 2000.

Ever since that trip, I have kept touch with local celebrity and Aboriginal Land Council CEO Ian "Cowboy" Woods, his wife Irene, and their sons Jamie and Rene. Both Jamie and Rene have forged great careers over the years as well, with Jamie being a Melbourne Storm and Cronulla Sharks lower grader, and Rene playing Grade Rugby Union in the Shute Shield Sydney competition .

Talking about the team, it has a very diverse group of players of ethnic origin in the team, including the Fijian Clan who travel up 220 km, one way from Robinvale, a Victorian town near Mildura, to play and train. The Fijians are settled in Australia and work all day picking fruit and vegetables to earn enough money to survive and also send substantial amounts home to their respective families to help live a better quality of life in Fiji.

I could not write an article without mentioning local identity and great club man Danny Byrnes - who at 49 is possibly the oldest player in Bush Rugby League. Danny is revered in the community for the tremendous amount of skill, knowing and love of the game he brings to the Magpies Club. Over 300 games, and he puts in a full match every week. Back to my final year of team Rugby League, we have had a very successful year culminating in a trip to the grand final. We are on our way to the game now as I sit down the back of the bus writing this article reflecting back over my journey in Rugby League.

On previous bus trips in my time in over 200 professional games of Rugby League in Australia and the UK, the mood on the bus is usually quiet and reserved with some nervous conversation and plenty of fruit and energy bars. Not on this bus, rather than watching highly motivating movies such as Braveheart or Any Given Sunday, the boys would rather watch Cool Running or Happy Gilmore and movies that they can all have a laugh at to create a family atmosphere. This is great to be a part of, and a real special treat for me. It helps me appreciate how important Rugby League, or indeed sport, is part of the fabric of Country Life. On one of the most recent bus trips on route to the game, the whole team - including the bus driver - were singing out loud to the chorus of a particular song. What a feeling before the match, (It was a semi final vs the minor premiers which , by the way, we won as well).

The mood on the way home is exactly the same - except add a few beers - and usually the music is a bit louder. How much fun is this bush Footy?

I have seen many pre-game meals over the years including bananas , sandwiches, protein shakes and so forth, but to see half the team eating a Four and Twenty Pie washed down with a Can of Coke 2 hours before kick off, is amazing. They must all have an iron lined stomach as it doesn't affect anyone out here!!

On another positive note, the Hay Club has instigated a weekend where former NRL players come to the bush to play a single game for the Club , all in the name of this great game. This year Shane Millard and Simon Woolford came along to join forces with me and the other players to tackle Darlington Point/Coleambally Roosters at Hay Park Oval.

Another great aspect of the travel is to experience the great Australian Outback on the fortnightly 2 to 5 hour bus trips. Looking out the window and seeing the beautiful country side and all the native animals pass you by, is an experience in itself.

Finally, I can see the ground we are approaching to play the Grand Final today , the nerves have just set in and I'm ready to play, however there is a small stepping stone , the Man on the Gate is asking for another \$10 to enter, ha ha, having to dig into my wallet again, \$ 20 to play today, this is what it's all about!!!

Win, lose or draw tonight the celebrations will be big, hopefully with tears of joy not tears of defeat.

I'll be hoping to draw back to some of my experience playing for the Storm in the famous 1999 grand final and will be keep to help the younger players out through the game.

Bye for now, and thanks for allowing me to play this great game for so long, time to hang up the boots!!!

Thanks for the memories.

Ben Roarty

