



THE RED MACHINE

Newsletter of the Marist St Pats Rugby Football Club Inc

PO Box 3472, Wellington

www.msprugby.co.nz

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CUP REMINDERS:

Players register for the 2008 season at the gym (left), below the newly-installed plaques that record the club's Jubilee Cup history.

In the pre-merger days, six titles were won by the Marist Old Boys club, and one by St Pats Old Boys - the solitary blue plaque in the photo. Since the 1971 amalgamation, Marist St Pats has gone on to collect a further 11 Cups.

The most recent was in 2002, with last year's side almost making it another.

- Premier coach Murray Tocker previews the 2008 season inside.

Hard work in off-season set to pay off

by John Holden
MSP chairman

Welcome to 2008! Especially, welcome to new and returning coaches, managers, players, supporters and management committee members - and thank you to everyone for continuing to offer their time. Volunteers are MSP's foundation; it is enormous and appreciated!

After being involved with MSP through the juniors for more than eight seasons it was a great honour to be elected chairperson of Marist St Pats for 2008.

As this year's committee settles to its work the presence of previous committees is frequently felt in the many facilities and transactions that the club has benefited from.

Since December, the energy, enthusiasm and friendship among the many that make up the MSP family has been overwhelming. In the off-season, MSP has had something of a re-condition - each part of the club, from coaching and facilities through

to finance and sponsorship, has been looked at and improved.

There have been talks to college groups, and teams hosted at MSP's gym to give lads an initial look at our facilities. Hundreds of calls have been made (including overseas to chase players who may be in Wellington for the season), and we have sent out letters and emails.

And there have been numerous meetings to coordinate coaches, managers and players for 2008.

MSP is made up of many parts, and each has to function at its best to make the club work as a whole.

We have a solid base to start. Already Henry Fidow and team have coordinated a working-bee for painting, cleaning and repairs to prepare the clubrooms for another season. Initiatives for 2008 include:

- introduction of at least one women's rugby team
- appointing John Duignan as our full-time coaching coordinator
- developing the gym's weight-

training facilities

- 'Coaching the Coaches' senior and junior programmes
- maintaining the best rugby website in Wellington
- communicating with everyone by e-mail, and txts
- seeking new income sources to develop MSP's facilities
- working with 14 stakeholders at Hataitai Park on clubrooms' facilities
- working with the WRFU and WCC to develop 'Evans Bay Stadium'
- placing the club's history of Jubilee Cup wins in the gym.
- Pat Dunn visiting primary schools for the under 6-13 junior grades to promote playing for MSP.

On behalf of MSP's management committee, enjoy the club's outstanding gym and clubrooms facilities, plan and strive for success and, most importantly, enjoy the 2008 rugby season.

Cautious assessment of season's prospects

New premier coach Murray Tocker is cautious about the team's prospects for 2008 despite some promising signs.

"We'll be looking at each game week by week, and we'll be taking nothing for granted," says Murray, who will be drawing on his 14 seasons playing premier rugby as he takes over the top coaching job at MSP this year.

The first full pre-season game, a 22-15 win over Hamilton Marist at the Spillane tournament, was mistake-ridden and a reminder of how much work lies ahead, he says, although it was followed by a much improved effort against Auckland Marist the next day.

A core of experienced players including 2007 Sportsman of the Year Jamie Parkinson, Ged Robinson,



MURRAY TOCKER studying player form at the Spillane tournament.

progress.

Sevens star Victor Vito should be back at the club after the Adelaide tournament early in April, and lock Nick Passi will return in May from a stint playing in Spain.

First-five Fa'atonu Fili is looking

Dan Scanlon, Craig Simeon, Reece Poutawera and JP Tocker are all back for the season, and Murray says last year's promising young players will need to continue their

to a settled year at MSP, while new faces on the scene include former Avalon halfback Peter Sciascia. Returning MSP players include Brendan Watt from Taranaki and George Cook from Christchurch.

Overall playing numbers at the club will be boosted by the addition of two new sides, with a reserve grade and a women's team taking the total to 12.

Clubrooms open

The first day the clubrooms will be open is on **Saturday 5 April** - all players, members, and supporters invited.

The season kicks off a week earlier, on Saturday 29 March. The club's top three teams will all play Old Boys Uni sides at Porirua Park as part of the Gala Day to open the club season.

Old Timers' Day

Old Timers' Day is early this year - put Saturday 19 April in your diary.

The premiers and senior 1s will be playing Norths at Evans Bay, and all other MSP teams will be drawn to play in town.

A luncheon will be provided at the clubrooms beforehand.

First women's rugby team at MSP

A new chapter in the club's history will be written on 5 April when the first women's rugby team to wear Marist St Pats' colours plays its first competition game.

An enthusiastic squad of over 30 players has been training hard, and they had their first pre-season match against Petone at the Evans Bay Intermediate ground on 15 March.

On 29 March they play Waikanae in another pre-season match, again at EBIS at 11am, the normal starting time for women's games.

Coach Damian Rapira-Davies says rather than recruiting players from other clubs, a lot of work has gone into building up a genuine MSP team. Many players are from St Catherines, where Damian is in his fourth year coaching the 1st XV.

MSP Committee 2008

MSP's management committee for 2008 is:

President: Paul Quinn

Chairman: John Holden

Deputy chair: Alan Woods

Secretary: Ken Ah Kuoi

Club captain: Bryce Tietjens

Treasurer: MaryAnn Spillane

Junior convenor: Pat Dunn

WRFU delegate: Alan Woods

Committee:

Henry Fidow, Ina Hansen, Pat Martin, Brendan Milne, Neil Murphy, Richie Renouf, Andrew Robinson

Chaplain: Fr Geoff Broad.



PLANNING: Transfers, playing squads, coaching appointments, recruitment, pre-season games and 101 other tasks are all part of the Rugby sub-committee's job. At a recent meeting are (from left): Tony Meachen, Bryce Tietjens, Brian McGuinness, Brian Coulter, John Duignan, Gus Slade, Murray Tocker, and Kevin Horan.



THIS MSP SQUAD defeated Auckland Marist, also a club finalist in their competition last year, to take out their division final

Winning start at Spillane

MSP kicked off the 2008 season by collecting the Ham Cumming Cup at the Spillane tournament in Auckland on 8-9 March.

A 22-15 win over Hamilton Marist in Saturday's game was followed by a 32-7 victory over Auckland Marist in Sunday's final to secure the trophy.

That win will see MSP promoted to the top division to compete for the Spillane Cup in 2009.

Premier coach Murray Tocker says

Saturday's game was a typically scratchy pre-season effort, but the team played a lot better the following day against a side that had contested last year's club final in Auckland.

Several younger players in the squad made a big impression, particularly last year's Rongotai 1st XV hooker Liu Taituave, and lock Charlie Graham from St Pats Town.

Murray says flanker Sio Tui-tuia played a great final - the team

had been down 7-5 at half-time against a far bigger side but, to their hosts' surprise, MSP ran away with it in the second half.



DAN SCANLON accepts the Ham Cumming Cup

Short cuts

In the news

Watch out for an upcoming issue of *Rugby News* which will feature Marist St Pats as part of its Toyota Club of the Week profiles.

The weekly magazine claims a readership of 464,000. Sports writer Campbell Burnes says he appreciated the input from life members Kevin Horan and John Gordon in putting together the profile, which should appear in the next few weeks.

Genuine all rounder

Mark Houghton, the first-five who collected two trophies at last year's MSP prizegiving, is also starring in cricket over the summer.

Mark won awards in 2007 for being the club's top points' scorer and outstanding under-85 player.

Over the summer, he has been featuring as a left-arm spinner for the Wellington Firebirds in 20/20, one-day, and four-day games. He also scored 81 batting at No.8 against Central Districts.

Return of reserve grade

Former MSP colt Nick Lissette has been busy over the summer putting together a reserve grade side, the first time for quite a few seasons MSP has fielded a team in that grade.

"It's social rugby with a competitive edge, a kind of 80/80 for fat boys," says Nick.

He believes many players pull out of rugby too early so he's keen to get former players back in the fold.

MSP players from past seasons

who plan to be part of the team include Damian Fordyce, Josh Masson, Peter Twiddle, Heston Stanley, Henry Fidow, Eddie Uhatafe, and Nick himself.

New players to join the squad are always welcome - Nick hopes to build numbers to 30 or more as many of the players have family and work commitments which will see them have to take a few weekends off here and there.

Anyone interested can contact Nick on Ph 0274 400 517, email nick.l@bbignite.co.nz.



MaryAnn Spillane awarded life membership

Two club members - MaryAnn Spillane and Paul Quinn - were awarded life membership at the club's AGM in November 2007. MaryAnn is profiled here, and Paul will feature in the next Red Machine.

In every successful club, there is always a dedicated man or woman who will do this or that to help, in a quiet unassuming manner, to ensure that whatever job needs to be done is done well.

The 'guy' in our club who has filled this role for many years is MaryAnn Spillane, the first female member of Marist St Pats to be honoured with life membership.

MaryAnn became honorary treasurer of the club in 1994, the year before MSP's 25th Jubilee. She skilfully handled the financial arrangements as the various celebrations were organised.

In the years since, her treasurer's reports in the club's annual reports reflect a wide range of individual

skills including meticulous attention to detail and hours of dedicated work as she ensured the budgeted revenue was exceeded, or costs were held within budget.

Though MaryAnn likes to say "Marist St Pats has a successful formula for generating revenue, and a reputation for doing what it does very well", little would have been achieved over the years without her ongoing dedication and her ability to do whatever is asked of her, yet make it seem so little bother.

Her attendance and personal contribution at management committee meetings has been excellent. Her behind-the-scenes efforts with our \$100 raffles, preparations for Shamrock Club dinners, prizegivings, social functions at the clubrooms, and her skills when



MARYANN SPILLANE

major financial projects such as the gym refurbishment occur, highlight just what a wonderful asset she has been to our club.

In 1996 MaryAnn was awarded the trophy for Outstanding Contribution of Unobtrusive Service; in 2000 she received the Outstanding Administrator award; and in 2002 the W.M.O'Connor Cup for Outstanding Club Member.

MaryAnn is part of a great family involvement over the years - brother John as coach and chairman, brother Tony as manager and club captain, and mother Patsy in a host of helpful tasks.

MaryAnn's life membership is all the more meritorious in that while fulfilling her treasurer's role she has also been a friend and confidante to so many club members.

(MaryAnn is continuing in her 15th year as treasurer in 2008).

OBITUARY

Plenty on offer at MSP Shamrock golf tournament in May

Golfers who take part in the annual MSP Shamrock Club tournament in May are unlikely to go hungry as they putter their way around the Miramar golf course.

The popular event, due to tee off on Thursday 15 May at 12.30, features a free on-course sausage sizzle, complimentary on-course refreshments and snacks, and finger food served in the clubhouse at the

completion of a round.

The tournament is open to all MSP players and members, and costs \$35 per player. Shamrock Club members get their first two entries free. The field is limited to 96 players on a first-in, first-served basis.

To enter, contact either Tony Duffin (tony.duffin@paradise.net.nz) or Peter Woods (woods24@xtra.co.nz).

The tournament will use an Ambrose format so both pros and non-golfers can take part.

The club records with regret the sudden passing of Kevin Maher on 28 December 2007. Kevin played, coached, managed, and served on the committee at various times over past 30 years.

Kevin was also an active member of the Shamrock Club, enjoying the annual golf tournaments and club dinners when time permitted.

He was part of W P Maher Travel, headed by his father, Bill, who played for the Marist Old Boys Club, and brother Kerry, a locking partner of Kevin's in the St Pats Old Boys Club.

His nephew Anthony is a current premier player, completing a three-generation rugby association with Marist St Pats.

To Anne, Natalie, Juliette, and Nick the club extends its deepest sympathy in Kevin's passing.



KEVIN MAHER

Junior Open Day

An open day for juniors will be held on

Saturday 5 April
MSP gym, Evans Bay

9.30am: under-6s to under-8s
10.30am: under-9s to under-13s.
All junior players invited!

The RED MACHINE is compiled by Pat Martin. Printing by Milne Printers. Photos Bryce Tietjens, John Holden.

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